

FREEDOM IN CHRIST
ACCORDING TO PAUL THE APOSTLE

by
SHERWOOD ANDERSON

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Preface

I have tried to be as accurate as practicable in citing the sources from which I derived the bulk of the material for this thesis. There are, however, a number of individual ideas which are original as far as I know. These include the discovery of freedom as a major category for Paul's explanation of Christ's mission, some of the distinctions drawn between the Stoic and the Pauline conception of freedom, the realization that Stephen was freedom's first herald and that from him young Saul realized even before he became a Christian that the new sect stood for freedom from law, the suggested connection between Paul's proclamation of a law-free gospel and the naming of the new sect, the solution of the problem of Titus' circumcision, and the possible interrelation of the Pauline conception of freedom and a particular instance of modern political freedom. All the phraseology is mine, except where there are quotations, and except for a few instances where I have taken a particular expression from some other context and reworked it to fit mine. Though the construction materials are borrowed from many places, the edifice itself has become mine through the design and labor I have built into it.

The study has been richly rewarding personally. I have gained a biblical rationale for something I have for a number of years suspected, and that is that the restrictive practices imposed upon people by some of our more conservative brethren are in fact more inimical to a vigorous, dynamic Christianity than is the

ethical freedom they seem to dread. I have discovered that there is no freedom which is not Christian, and this discovery alone has been an emancipation for me. The same power of the Spirit which keeps those who are saved by faith alone from a workless life keeps them from abusing a morality without rules and a Bible without the uncompromising dogma of plenary inspiration. This last point is unfortunately outside of the scope of the thesis, for I would have liked to develop it. But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there freedom apart from works, above rules, and beyond dogma, need not be feared.

Of the books and articles which I have read in connection with this dissertation, there are two which are outstanding. One is by Martin Luther, "On the Councils and the Churches", and the other is by Arthur S. Peake, The Quintessence of Paulinism. Luther proposed the explanation to the apparent contradiction between the Apostolic Decree and complete Gentile freedom, and Peake has drawn out the momentous significance of Paul's victory at Jerusalem. Both of these men have caught not only the excitement and the inspiration of that paramount controversy of the primitive Church, but they have seen the relevancy of the outcome for the existence of an unfettered gospel. These two essays stimulated my enthusiasm and captured my imagination to a degree which opened wide the possibility of writing a thesis which was not only informative but

meaningful. Some of the studies which have been written about Christian freedom are theological, some are exegetical, and some are ethical, but Luther and Peake better than any of the others have seen the connection between Paul's belief and his action, and have given me the key to the integration of the theology, the exegesis, and the ethics of freedom with its supreme historical and existential importance. Freedom is an integral part of the Christian message, and more than that, it is indispensable for the survival of the Church.

I wish to thank Princeton Theological Seminary for the Fellowship in New Testament which provided a large part of the financial requirements for my study abroad. I am indebted to the University of Edinburgh for its generous attempt to pour so much of its learning and scholarship into its overseas students. Especially do I wish to thank Rev. William Manson, D. D., Professor Emeritus of New Testament, and Rev. James S. Stewart, D. D., Professor of New Testament Language, Literature and Theology, both of New College, for their counsel, criticism and encouragement throughout the time of my residence in Scotland.

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Introduction

A. The Corpus of Pauline Literature

All that is known of Paul the Apostle is contained in letters which he personally wrote or dictated to Christians in various parts of the Roman Empire, and in the Acts of the Apostles, a treatise which relates the history of the early Church and Paul's four missionary journeys. There are thirteen letters in the New Testament which are attributed to Paul. The four longest epistles, Galatians, First and Second Corinthians, and Romans are universally agreed to have come directly from the pen of Paul or that of his amanuensis. It is in these four that Paul's doctrine of freedom is most fully developed. All but a few historians agree that First Thessalonians, Philippians, and Philemon are genuine. Colossians is accepted by most critics. Second Thessalonians and Ephesians are accepted by many. The "pastoral epistles", First and Second Timothy and Titus, are generally regarded as post-Pauline, except perhaps for some fragments which came down from Paul.¹ The usual order in which the ten most widely accepted are placed, their dates (all of which may actually have been one year earlier), and their probable place of composition, are as follows:²

1. John Gresham Machen, The Origin of Paul's Religion, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, Limited, 1921), pp. 31, 32.

2. Alan Hugh McNeile, An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament, revised by C. S. C. Williams, (Second Edition; Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1953), p. 124, et passim.

I and II Thessalonians	51	
I Corinthians	55 or 56	Ephesus
II Corinthians	56	
Galatians	56 or 49	Ephesus, or in or en route to Corinth
Romans	57	Probably Corinth
Colossians-Philemon-Ephesians	c. 61	Probably Rome
Philippians	c. 62 or 54-56	Rome or Ephesus

The three pastoral epistles, I and II Timothy and Titus, were perhaps expansions on Pauline fragments written after the Apostle's death by a disciple.¹ This is believed to be so because the author of the pastorals differs from Paul in several ways. He contradicts and denounces Gnostic Judaism rather than offering a refutation, his style lacks Paul's fire and force, his vocabulary is nearer to second century Christian writings than to Paul, he deals with ecclesiastical organization rather than with Christian doctrines, he assumes that the people to whom he writes have a mature understanding of basic doctrines, and he emphasizes the incarnation rather than the death of Christ.² The pastorals were seemingly written to provide Paulinism with a system of regulation to replace Paul's personal influence. Paul's name was borrowed to

1. The fragments genuinely Pauline, i. e., those which appear in Paul's letters, are identified by P. N. Harrison, The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles, (London, Oxford University Press, 1921), in Appendix IV.

2. McNeile, op. cit., pp. 188-201.

lend the sanction of apostolic authority to these needs of discipline in the changing life of the Church.¹ Another indication that the pastorals are post-Pauline, or at least in a class by themselves, is their arrangement. The first nine Pauline letters are placed in order of length, like the chapters of the Koran, with the longest first. The last four books are also placed in order of length, with the longest first. The first group is addressed to churches, the last group to individuals. It is especially to be noted that the pastorals do not contain the word *ἐλευθερία* or any of its cognates, they do not refer to emancipation from the law, and they do not deal with the Church's struggle to extricate itself from the Synagogue.

The Pauline authorship of the so-called letter to the Ephesians is disputed, but the evidence for its rejection is not completely persuasive. The argument against its apostolic authorship is based upon a subtle variation of accent in the letter which seems to some to be different enough from other Pauline letters to ^{suggest} conclude that it comes from an alien hand. However, a, the expository nature of the epistle may explain its long sentences and involved style; b, leading ideas found in other epistles appear in Ephesians; c, the early problem of the rivalry of Judaizing Christianity is mentioned in 2:5 and 2:8; d, the attack against idolatry in 4:17-24 differs in emphasis but not in kind from

1. Wilfred Lawrence Knox, St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles, (Cambridge, University Press, 1939), p. 185.

similar attacks against idolatry in Rom. 1:18-25, I Cor. 8:5, 10:14, and Col. 3:5; e, and Paul is not bound to employ the word "mystery" in 5:32 precisely as he uses it elsewhere.¹ This letter and the nine usually agreed to be genuinely Pauline will serve as the major source for the investigation of the Pauline conception of Christian freedom.

The Book of Acts was written by a man known to have been an intimate of Paul. Part of the book is a diary of the travels of the author with Paul.² The rest of the book was written by the same man³ from two or perhaps three sources, and the whole is the story of the expansion of the early Church from Jerusalem to Rome and from a religion which was the exclusive possession of a chosen people to a religion for all mankind. While the author does not refer to himself by name, tradition says that he was a physician named Luke. He had already written a "first book"⁴, which is the present third Gospel, proving that he was a man well informed about the ministry of Jesus. The reliability of Acts has been substantiated over a large area by comparative studies of the history of the time and by extensive excavations in many of the

1. Ibid., pp. 182-184.

2. Vide Acts 16:10-17, 20:5-15, 21:1-18, 27:1-28:16.

3. The identity of the style of the "we" sections with the rest of the book and with the Gospel of Luke as well has been established by Adolf Harnack and Sir John Hawkins.

4. Acts 1:1.

cities cited by Luke. A twentieth century journey by the present writer to the Pauline cities mentioned in Acts—in Italy, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Israel and Cyprus—demonstrates everywhere even today Luke's geographical accuracy. The Book of Acts is the primary source and a reliable source for the history of Paul's struggle to establish the freedom of the Church.

B. The Vocabulary of Paul's Religion

Christianity for Paul is essentially separation from all that is alien to God through unity with Christ. While it is truly said that "The heart of Paul's religion is union with Christ"¹, it is equally true that Paul's most varied explanations of his religion have to do with separation from evil. There are no less than forty-two words found in the Pauline epistles which are most readily understood in their negative implications—that is, separation from evil rather than union with Christ. This is not at all to imply that these terms lack a positive meaning. When the Apostle says, for instance, that there is "freedom . . . in Christ"², unity as well as separation is meant. But when one thinks of salvation, one immediately thinks of allied words like deliverance, redemption, liberation, emancipation, rescue, etc., all of which have to do with being freed from restraint, captivity, peril, evil, and the like, rather than with being freed for safety, or for freedom, or for good. To provide the basis for balanced and careful thought,

1. James S. Stewart, A Man in Christ, the Vital Elements of St. Paul's Religion, (New York and London, Harper and Brothers, n. d.), p. 147.

2. Galatians 2:4.

a brief glossary of the words Paul uses expressive of separation from evil, clarifying distinctions among the analagous words and explaining shades of meaning, is necessary.

Even though Paul uses a cluster of words to express this separation, all except for a few fall into one of four categories: freedom, purity, justification, and preservation. Each word expresses a part of the whole, just as a particular facet on a diamond reflects a certain part of the fire and brilliance of light. The most inclusive of these terms is σωτηρία, salvation, the saving and preservation of man from the spiritual consequences of sin. And the most characteristic of Pauline expressions is δικαιοσύνη, righteousness, the character of being righteous. But ἐλευθερία, freedom, has its place as one of the major concepts which Paul uses to express separation from evil. Thus the study of the Pauline conception of freedom in Christ is of essential importance in understanding his conception of Christianity itself.

1. Freedom

There are seven words which belong to this category. They are: ἐλευθερία, ἐλεύθερος, ἐλευθερώω, ἀπελεύθερος, ἐξαγοράσω, ἐξουσία in special instances, and δίκαιος in special instances. Also, a number of words suggest themselves to readers of the English versions which seemingly should be included here. These English words which appear in Paul's letters actually refer to Greek words which have nothing to do with freedom. These are:

- a. "free of charge", I Cor. 9:18, is from one word, ἰσάπαρος, without expense, from δαπάνη, expense, cost, plus the alpha privative. It is hapax legomenon in the New Testament and the Septuagint.
- b. "freedom", Acts 22:28. πολίτεια, citizenship, and so translated in the Revised Standard Version but not in the King James Version.
- c. "liberty", Luke 4:18. ἀφεσις, a dismissal, release, forgiveness.
- d. "liberty", Acts 24:23. ἀνέσις, a loosening, a relaxation.
- e. "liberty", Acts 27:3. ἐπιτρέπω, to permit, to give leave, to send. It is translated "to give leave" in the Revised Standard Version, but as "liberty" in the King James.

The three forms of the word "freedom" (noun, adjective, and verb) occur in only six of Paul's letters. A concordance which also shows the distribution, frequency, and sequence of each of the three forms follows below.

Concordance to the Pauline Usage of Freedom and its Cognates

Book	ἐλευθερία	ἐλεύθερος	ἐλευθερώ	Total
Romans		6:18 6:20 7:3	6:18 6:22 8:2 8:21	
	8:21			7
I Corinthians		7:21 7:22 7:39 9:1 9:19		
	10:29	12:13		7
II Corinthians	3:17			1
Galatians	2:4	3:28 4:22 4:23 4:26 4:30 4:31		
	5:1		5:1	
	5:13 5:13			11
Ephesians		6:8		1
Colossians		3:11		1
	7	16	5	28 ¹

1. David Brainerd Watermulder, Paul's Doctrine of Freedom, with Special Reference to its Ethical Implications, A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Theology, (Princeton Theological Seminary, 1948), p. 6 mistakenly reports that the three words appear twenty-seven times in Paul's writings.

a. ἐλευθερία, freedom, liberty, opposed to δουλεία, slavery, bondage. It is used seven times in Paul's letters.

1) Freedom taken from the phraseology of slave manumission. Galatians 5:1. There are four possible readings for this verse.

a) "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore."

τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν.
στήκετε οὖν... This is the reading adopted by the RSV.

b) "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."

τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἣ Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς
ἠλευθέρωσεν στήκετε. This is the reading
adopted by the KJV. It adds a relative pronoun after ἐλευθερίᾳ

There are some other minor variations of word order. The adverb
οὖν may appear after ἐλευθερίᾳ instead of being
dropped after στήκετε, and ἡμᾶς may appear before
instead of after Χριστὸς.

c) Beginning with 4:31, "... we are not children of a slave,

but of the free woman, for which freedom Christ has set us free."

ἣ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν.
στήκετε... Here a relative pronoun is substituted for the

definite article before ἐλευθερίᾳ. This unites 5:1a
with the preceding paragraph about Sarah and Hagar, and "Stand
fast therefore" begins a new paragraph of admonition.

d) "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore."

ἐπ' ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν.
στήκετε οὖν... ἐπ' is here substituted for τῇ

in an attempt to harmonize 5:1 with 5:13. The first reading best explains the variants, and the sentence should be translated in some such way as in a).

Galatians 5:13, "For you were called for freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh . . ."

ὕμεῖς γὰρ ἐπ' ἐλευθερίᾳ ἐκλήθητε,
ἀδελφοί· μόνον μὴ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν
εἰς ἀφορμὴν τῇ σαρκί

2) Freedom which is found in God.

Romans 8:21, ". . . the creation itself will be set free . . .

and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God."

αὕτῃ ἡ κτίσις ἐλευθερωθήσεται
... εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης
τῶν τέκνων τοῦ Θεοῦ.

II Corinthians 3:17, ". . . where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

οὗ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα κυρίου,
ἐλευθερία.

Galatians 2:4, ". . . false brethren . . . who slipped in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus . . ."

ψευδαδέλφους, οἵτινες παρεισηλθόντες
κατασκοπήσασιν τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν
ἣν ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ

3) Freedom used in an ethical sense.

I Corinthians 10:29, "For why should my liberty be determined by another man's scruples?"

ἵνα τί γὰρ ἡ ἐλευθερία μου

κρίνεται ὑπὸ ἄλλης συνεκδήσεως;

b. ἑλεύθερος, free, used sixteen times in Paul's letters.

{ ἑλεύθερος is connected with ΕΛΕΥΘΩ, from which
ἑλεύσομαι, the future of ἔρχομαι, come, go, is
derived.¹ The word is the opposite of δοῦλος, slave, one
whose will another directs.

1) Freedom from restraint in general.

a) From men.

I Cor. 9:1, "Am I not free?" οὐκ εἰμὶ ἑλεύθερος;

I Cor. 9:19, "For though I am free from all men, I have made
myself a slave to all . . ." ἑλεύθερος γὰρ ὢν ἐκ πάντων

b) From law.

Gal. 4:26, "But the Jerusalem above is free . . ." ἡ δὲ ἄνω
Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἑλευθέρα ἐστίν.

c) From the law against adultery.

Rom. 7:3, "But if her husband dies she is free from that law . . ."
ἑλευθέρα ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου

I Cor. 7:39, "If the husband dies, she is free to be married to
whom she wishes . . ." ἑλευθέρα ἐστὶν ᾧ
θέλει γαμήσθαι

d) From righteousness.

Rom. 6:20, "When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard
to righteousness." ἑλεύθεροι ἦτε τῇ
δικαιοσύνῃ

1. Hermann Cremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New
Testament Greek, (Third English Edition; Edinburgh, T. & T.
Clark, 1886), p. 251.

2. Notice the different prepositions used.

2) Freedom in a civil sense, from slavery.

a) As an adjective.

I Cor. 7:21, "But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity."

ἐἴ καὶ δύνῃσαι
ἐλεύθερος γενέσθαι

I Cor. 7:22b, "... he who was free when called is a slave of

Christ." ὁμοίως ὁ ἐλεύθερος κληθεὶς
δοῦλός ἐστιν Χριστοῦ. (For I Cor.

22a, see ἀπελεύθερος)

I Cor. 12:13, "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one

body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free . . ."

ἐἴτε
δοῦλοι ἐἴτε ἐλεύθεροι

Gal. 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither

slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all

one in Christ Jesus." οὐκ ἐνὶ δοῦλος

οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος

Eph. 6:8, "... whatever good anyone does, he will receive

the same again from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free."

ἐἴτε δοῦλος ἐἴτε ἐλεύθερος

b) As an adjective with the noun understood.

Gal. 4:22, "... Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one

by a free woman." ἓνα ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης

καὶ ἓνα ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας

Gal. 4:23, "... the son of the free woman [was born] through

promise . . ."

ὁ δὲ ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας
διὰ τῆς ἐπαγγελίας

Gal. 4:30, "... the slave shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." ... μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἐλευθερίας.

Gal. 4:31, "... we are not children of the slave, but of the free woman." οὐκ ἐσμὲν παιδίσκης τέκνα ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐλευθερίας

Col. 3:11, "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all." οὗτου οὐκ ἐστὶν δούλος, ἐλεύθερος...

c. ἐλευθερώω to make free. It is used five times in Paul's letters.

1) Deliverance from sin.

Rom. 6:18, "... having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness." ἐλευθερωθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας

Rom. 6:22, "... you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God ..." ἐλευθερωθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας

2) Deliverance from law.

Rom. 8:2, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death." ὁ γὰρ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος... ἡλευθέρωσέν σε ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας

Gal. 5:1, "For freedom Christ has set us free ..." τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἡλευθέρωσεν.

"The combination of the noun with the verb stresses the completeness of the act, the aorist (or point) tense indicating both its momentary and comprehensive character; it was done once for all."¹

The meaning is: "not to bring us into another form of bondage did Christ liberate us from that in which we were born, but in order to make us free from bondage." On the "punctiliar" force of the verb Moulton says, "ἑλευθεροῦν appears to be always punctiliar in NT, but it is not necessarily so: cf.

Sophocles OT 706, τὸ γ' εἰς ἑαυτὸν πᾶν ἑλευθεροῦ στομάχῳ, 'as for himself, he keeps his lips wholly pure.'²

3) Deliverance from corruption.

Rom. 8:21, ". . . because the creation itself will be set free

from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God."

διότι καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ κτίσις
ἑλευθερωθήσεται ἀπὸ τῆς
δουλείας τῆς φθορᾶς

d. ἀπελεύθερος, a freed man. The word is hapax

legomenon in I Cor. 7:22. The fuller word brings out the spiritual emancipation ("a freedman of the Lord") in contrast to the natural freedman. The thought is similar to that found in Paul's letter to Philemon, when the Apostle urges the slave owner to take back his runaway slave who had become a Christian, "no longer as a slave, but more than a slave."³

1. W. E. Vine, An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, vol. II, (London, Oliphants Ltd., 1939-1941), p. 131.

2. James Hope Moulton, A Grammar of New Testament Greek, (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1906), p. 149.

3. Philemon 16.

e. *ἐξαγοράσω* to redeem, to acquire, literally, to buy out of the market; a strengthened form of *ἀγοράσω*, to buy (not found in Paul's letters). The word is connected with the concept of freedom, as is *ἀπολύτρωσις*, through the imagery of slave emancipation. It is used especially of securing the release of a slave by making the payment of the slave's value to the temple treasury of a particular god. Paul may have been thinking of this, or "... he might be thinking of one method of adoption under Roman Law, by which the adoptive father made a fictitious purchase from the natural father."¹ *ἐξαγοράσω* signifies the price paid with a view toward redemption. *ἀπολύτρωσις* signifies the setting at liberty, the actual deliverance. The former word is always used metaphorically in Paul's letters.

Gal. 3:13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law . . ."

Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν

Gal. 4:5, "God sent forth his Son . . . to redeem those who were under the law . . ."² ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ

Eph. 5:16 and Col. 4:5, exactly the same in the Greek except for the word order, meaning "making the most of" the time, or "buying up the opportunity".

1. Alfred Walter Frank Blunt, The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians in the Revised Version, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 112.

2. The 1946 edition of the Revised Standard Version accidentally places the numeral 5 in what is actually the middle of the fifth verse. This misprint makes the phrase quoted above appear in Galatians 4:4.

f. ἐξουσία, authority, right, power, from ἐξεστί, the impersonal verb, "it is lawful". From its original meaning of leave, permission, liberty of doing as one pleases, it passed on to the ability or strength with which one is indued. Paul uses the word generally in one of two senses:

1) Freedom to exercise inward force or power, usually translated as right or control by the Revised Standard Version. Rom. 9:21, I Cor. 7:37, 9:4, 9:5, 9:6, 9:12, 9:18, II Thes. 3:9.

2) Power to rule.

- a) Paul's apostolic authority. II Cor. 10:8, 13:10.
- b) Temporal authority of sovereigns. Rom. 13:1, 13:2, 13:3.
- c) Supramundane authority of invisible powers. I Cor. 15:24, Eph. 1:21, 2:2, 3:10, 6:12, Col. 1:13, 1:16, 2:10, 2:15.

3) Exceptional uses. I Cor. 11:10 reads, "That is why a woman ought to have a veil on her head . . .", the veil being the symbol of authority placed over her. I Cor. 8:9, "Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling-block to the weak", where ἐξουσία reverts to its original meaning.

In addition, there are two verbs related to ἐξουσία. ἐξεστί, it is permitted, lawful, used five times,¹ and ἐξουσιάζω, to exercise authority over, used three times.²

As has been suggested, these three related words at times come close to the meaning of ἐλευθερία. Diogenes Laertius, a third century writer, defines freedom as a kind of ἐξουσία:

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- 1. I Cor. 6:12 (twice), 10:23 (twice), II Cor. 12:4.
 - 2. I Cor. 6:12, 7:4 (twice).

"Freedom is the power of independent action, whereas slavery is the privation of the same."¹

εἶναι γὰρ τὴν
ἐλευθερίαν ἐξουσίαν αὐτοπραγίας,
τὴν δὲ δουλείαν στέρξαι αὐτοπραγίας.

Diogenes Laertius here illustrates the semantic pattern of thought which Paul had also recognized and used. Paul asks, οὐκ εἰμι

ἐλεύθερος; "Am I not free?"² And then he immediately

parallels this idea with a phrase thrice repeated: οὐκ

ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν, "have we not authority?"³

ἐξουσία is nearest to ἐλευθερία in three

places. In the first instance Paul declares, "All things are

lawful for me', but I will not be enslaved by anything."⁴ πάντα

μοι ἔξεστιν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγὼ ἐξουσιάζομαι ὑπὸ τινός. Here the verb in the passive, meaning "be

under the authority of" is translated "be enslaved by". Paul

implies that the possession of independence is as useful a criterion

in discerning the will of God as is what is lawful. He refutes

those immoral people who rationalize their behavior with the catch

phrase "all things are lawful" by declaring that they are really

slaves of their immoralities. The immoral can be expected to

realize by the loss of their freedom that they have misinterpreted

the law. Since this is evidently what Paul is trying to communicate,

it is seen that ἐξουσιάζω approaches the meaning of

ἐλευθερώω.†

1. Diogenes Laertius, with an English translation by R. D. Hicks, (London, William Heinemann, 1925), vol. II, p. 227. (VII, 121.)

2. I Cor. 9:1. 3. I Cor. 9:4, 5, 6. 4. I Cor. 6:12.

† Ko-ἐξουσιάζω is not transitive, as ἐλευθερώω is (but examines)

In the second instance Paul says, "Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling-block to the weak."¹
 βλέπετε δὲ μή πως ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν
 αὕτη πρόσκομμα γένηται τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν.
 ἐξουσία is here to be understood as liberty although the

literal meaning is "this right which you assert" because the situation actually describes the release of the strong Christian from any quavering before idols representing so-called gods rather than an assertion of a positive power of authority.

In a passage a few pages later, Paul again brings up the matter of eating food which had been sacrificed to idols, and repeats the same idea, but this time uses the word ἐλευθερία.

"For why should my liberty be determined by another man's scruples?"²
 ἵνατί γάρ ἡ ἐλευθερία μου κρύβεται ὑπὸ
 ἄλλης συνειδήσεως; For Paul, then,
 ἐξουσία and ἐλευθερία are balanced on the point of
 a semantic pin, and in particular circumstances are interchangeable.

In the third instance, Paul twice again repeats the phrase of his opponents, "all things are lawful."³ As is pointed out above, Paul had already quoted this catch phrase⁴ in order to refute its careless use by showing that the licentious interpretation of law results only in abject servility. This time Paul quotes the phrase with the emphasis on its essential worth.

1. I Cor. 8:9.

2. I Cor. 10:29.

3. I Cor. 10:23 (twice). 4. I Cor. 6:12 (twice).

"All things are lawful" (^{2/e}ἐξέστι) . . . eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question . . . eat whatever is set before you . . . For why should my liberty (^{2/e}ἐλευθερία) be determined by another man's scruples?"¹ Paul is once again defining ^{2/e}ἐξέστι and ^{2/e}ἐλευθερία in terms of each other, for ^{2/e}ἐλευθερία exercised by a claim to authority is ^{2/e}ἐξουσία.

g. ^{2/e}δίκαιος, righteous. Paul uses this adjective and its five cognates exactly one hundred times in his letters. The cognates in this group sometime mean acquittal. A brief but systematic investigation of these six words will be given here in order to study how closely they approach freedom in meaning. For this reason they are placed under the category of freedom, although properly they belong under the category of justification.

1) The adjective was first used of persons observant of ^{2/e}δίκη, custom, rule, right, in the fulfillment of duties toward the gods and men. The original Anglo-Saxon spelling of righteous, rihtwis (rightwise), is an exact parallel of the original Greek meaning. The adjective means righteous or just, and is applied to:

God (Rom. 3:26)
men (Rom. 1:17, 2:13, 3:10, 5:7, 5:19, Gal. 3:11)
commandments (Rom. 7:12, II Thes. 1:5)
ideas (Phil. 4:8)

It is also used as a noun meaning right (Eph. 6:1, Phil. 1:7, Col. 4:1, II Thes. 1:6).

1. I Cor. 10:23-29.

2) $\delta\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$, righteousness, derived from $\delta\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$. The word has a moral element, that is, it concerns the basis of acceptance with God. It is also spoken of as an attribute of God, both in the nature of his character and the way in which he deals with men. The "righteousness of God" is more than the personal righteousness of God; the genitive indicates that righteousness finds its source in God. This is the "righteousness of God" which can become the righteousness of man.¹

a) Righteousness in its moral aspect. Acts 17:31, Rom. 6:13, 6:16, 6:18, 6:19, 6:20, 8:10, 10:5, 14:17, II Cor. 6:7, 6:14, 9:9, 9:10, 11:15, Eph. 4:24, 5:9, 6:14, Phil. 1:11, 3:6, 3:9.

b) Righteousness in its forensic aspect.

In connection with the word faith: $\delta\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$ $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\omega\varsigma$, $\delta\epsilon\alpha$ $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\omega\varsigma$, $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon\omega\varsigma$, $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha$ $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\nu$.
Rom. 4:11, 4:13, 9:30, 10:6, II Cor. 5:5, Phil. 3:9.

Without connection with the word faith. Rom. 4:3, 4:5, 4:6, 4:9, 4:11, 4:22, 5:17, 5:21, 9:30, 9:31, 10:4, 10:10, I Cor. 1:30, II Cor. 3:9, Gal. 2:21, 3:6, 3:21.

c) The righteousness of God. $\delta\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ or $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$. Rom. 1:17, 3:5, 3:21, 3:22, 3:25, 3:26, 10:3, 10:3, II Cor. 5:21, Phil. 3:9b.

Two of the above fifty-three references are especially important in showing that $\delta\kappa\alpha\lambda\omicron\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$ is a kind of freedom. "When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to

1. Ernest deWitt Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1921), pp. 469-473.

righteousness" ". . . and, having been set free from sin, [you] have become slaves of righteousness."¹ Clearly the slave of righteousness is the one who is free from sin, and vice versa. The sin referred to is that revealed by law.² Righteousness is the term used when the freedom is freedom from the law. Sanctification is the term used when the freedom is freedom from sin, as this same context shows: "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification . . ." (ἐς ἁγιασμόν).³ Righteousness, as Paul uses it in these two passages, is tantamount to freedom from the sin revealed by law.

3) δίκαιος, to deem right, to do one justice, derived from δικάω, meaning to recognize as δίκαιος. This word, like δίκαιος, may be divided into a moral and a forensic sense.

a) To show to be righteous. There are two uses which fall into this category. One speaks of God being justified.⁴ The other approaches the meaning of ἐλευθερώω, "I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted."⁵

b) To declare to be righteous. Rom. 2:13, 3:24, 3:26, 3:28, 4:5, 8:30 (twice), 8:33. Followed by ἐκ πίστεως, Rom. 3:30, 5:1, Gal. 2:16, 3:8, 3:24. Followed by ἐς ἔργων, Rom. 3:20, 4:2, Gal. 2:16. Followed by ἐν, Rom. 5:9, I Cor. 6:11, Gal. 2:17, 3:11, 5:4.

1. Rom. 6:20, 6:18.

2. Rom. 6:15.

3. Rom. 6:22.

4. Rom. 3:4.

5. I Cor. 4:4.

There are two other instances where *δικαίω* is used by the Apostle in a way which is of special relevance for this study. In the first instance, the word occurs twice: "every one that believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses."¹ And in the second instance, Paul says, "For he who has died is freed from sin."² There is a comment on this latter instance which is true for both:

"In Rom. 6:7 the context demands the meaning, to declare free or set free, the penalty having been suffered. In this case the unrighteousness of the person is presumed, but there is no element of grace or pardon, the release being based on the suffering of the penalty. Though this instance is quite exceptional, it shows how broad is the meaning of the word."³

4) *δικαίωμα*, precept, a concrete expression of righteousness; derived from *δικαίω*. Paul uses it as a sentence of acquittal, the opposite of condemnation (*κατάκριμα*).⁴ It is *δικαίωμα*, the declaration of innocence, or rather the sentence not of condemnation but of acquittal, the act of righteousness, which leads to *δικαίωσις*, the acquittal itself.⁵ Paul makes use of the word three other times, always in Romans.⁶ In these instances it is used to mean the ordinance, precept, or requirement of God or the law. Also it can mean "righteous act" (opposed

to *πράξεις*), Romans v. 18

1. Acts 13:39.

2. Romans 6:7.

3. Burton, *op. cit.*, p. 474.

4. *δικαίωμα* and *κατάκριμα* are contrasted in Romans 5:16.

5. *δικαίωμα* is shown to lead to *δικαίωσις* in Romans 5:18.

6. Romans 1:32, 2:26, 8:4.

5) $\delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\varsigma$, righteously, in accordance with what is right. This adverb appears only twice in Paul's epistles. "Come to your right mind . . ." ¹ and ". . . how holy and righteous and blameless was our behavior . . ." ²

6) $\delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$, acquittal, justification; derived from $\delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega$. The word is a noun like $\delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\mu\alpha$ and $\delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\sigma\upsilon\eta$. The act of acquittal ($\delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$) follows the declaration of acquittal ($\delta\epsilon\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\mu\alpha$). The word appears twice in Paul's letters, ³ and both times signifies acquittal from guilt upon the establishment of a person as just.

Freedom, the first of the four categories of words which express separation from all that is alien to God, is now complete. It has been shown that the category is bigger than the word, for Paul's idea of freedom cannot be restricted to his actual use of $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha$ and its cognates. The Apostle's ideas are fluid, they commingle and transfuse, and so it has been necessary to search out all the words which hint of freedom in order to determine the full measure of Paul's conception of the idea. Better to assess the place of $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha$ in Paul's religion, and in order to weigh and evaluate it by comparison, the three remaining categories and the words composing them are listed below.

2. Purity

- a. $\alpha\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$, to sanctify; and its five cognates.
- b. $\alpha\pi\omicron\lambda\omicron\upsilon\omega$, to wash.
- c. $\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$, to cleanse; and its cognate.

1. I Cor. 15:34.

2. I Thes. 2:10.

3. Rom. 4:25, 5:18.

3. Justification

- a. ²ἄφεσις, forgiveness; and its two cognates.
- b. δικαιόω, to deem right; and its five cognates.
- c. ἐπικαλύπτω, to cover over.
- d. καταλλάσσω, to reconcile; and its two cognates.

4. Preservation

- a. ²ἐξυλρέω, to deliver, rescue.
- b. ²ῥύομαι, to rescue.
- c. σώζω, to save; and its two cognates.

There are some other words expressive of deliverance from evil which Paul sometimes uses. These are stray words from everyday life which he only occasionally uses to convey a theological idea. None of these words is freighted with a previous philosophical heritage from the Greeks or a previous theological heritage from the Hebrews. Paul elevates them for a brief moment to illumine a spiritual thought, but when he finishes they are returned to their ordinary tasks. These words are as follows:

- a. ²ἐκβασις, a way out.
- b. ²ἐκφεύγω, to escape.
- c. καταρχέω, (with ³ἀπό), to discharge.
- d. λύω, to loose.
- e. χωρίζω, to separate.
- f. χώρις, apart.

Are the forty-two words listed above exhaustive of the idea of deliverance in the epistles? A number of Koine words which occur in the Greek New Testament have been omitted:

- a. ἀγοράζω to buy in the market, to purchase.
- b. ἀντίλυτρον, a corresponding price.
- c. ἀπαλλάσσω, to set free, deliver, release.
- d. ἀπολύω, to release.
- e. διασώζω, to bring safely through.
- f. ἱλάσκειν, to conciliate, appease, propitiate.
- g. ἱλασμός a means of appeasing, a propitiation.
- h. ἱεὺς propitious, merciful.
- i. καθαρισμός, cleansing, purification.
- j. καθαρότης, purity, cleanness.
- k. λύτρον, a ransom, a price.
- l. λύτρωσις, a ransoming, redemption, deliverance.
- m. λυτρωτής, a redeemer, deliverer.

These words are omitted simply because none of them appears in Paul's epistles, not even ἀπολύω, which occurs dozens of times in the non-Pauline literature of the New Testament.

In the last analysis there are just four concepts in the vocabulary of the Pauline epistles which are used to convey the idea of separation from sin: freedom, purity, justification, and preservation. And of these four concepts, freedom is a newcomer to the theological scene. It is Hellenistic, not Hebraic; it

is pagan, not prophetic; it is rational, not revelatory.¹

Here is a word which describes the goal of life for many of the most noble of the Greeks and Romans. Here is a word rich in political and philosophical meaning. Here is a word which expresses the purpose of God in Christ. And the Apostle Paul, constantly searching and groping for vocabulary, similes, metaphors, examples with which to explain his good news, welcomes this ready-made man-made word and transforms it from man's goal for himself to God's purpose for man and creation.

Very good
1

It is remarkable that *ἐλευθερία* is found in the Bible. It required a remarkable man to put it there. But Paul's experience of freedom in Christ was existentially validated by his personal encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus; he had the insight to perceive that freedom was an anknüpfungspunkt with the Gentiles who possessed the ideal but not the content; he had the breadth of mind to adopt freedom despite its lowly origin in the pagan mind; and he had the courage to act on freedom despite the opposition of his enemies and the vacillation of his friends. Paul was the only biblical writer to develop the religious significance of freedom. He was never shaken loose from his stand. Freedom is a cornerstone of his belief, and it takes its place beside the great historic religious conceptions of holiness, justification, and salvation.

1. "Bearing in mind that ideas can never be assigned with mathematical accuracy to their sources—even if we waive the possibility of 'new' ideas—we have nevertheless to reckon with all the facts, regardless of their effect upon our views of

C. Freedom and Free Will

Does Paul's doctrine of predestination preclude the possibility of freedom? "Christian freedom has nothing to do with physical or political freedom, religious freedom or liberty of conscience. Liberation in Jesus Christ is situated in the realm of PNEUMA."¹ As Child says concerning political liberty, "The enjoyment of external liberty cannot, therefore, of itself convey freedom in the full sense; nor can the absence of external liberty finally destroy it."² But is it as clear that Christian freedom has nothing to do with free will?

Paul believes in predestination,³ foreknowledge,⁴ calling,⁵ election.⁶ He says that the gospel of God was "promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures."⁷ He spoke

originality. When scholars, equally competent, assign a New Testament word or idea, on the one hand to the Jewish background and on the other to the Hellenistic, we are warranted in concluding either that the scholar is biased by his special knowledge, and so must not be allowed to press the parallelism unduly, or that we are observing the only kind of newness or originality possible in the realm of thought, i. e., a relative rather than absolute kind." George Hogarth Carnaby Macgregor and Alexander Converse Purdy, Jew and Greek: Tutors unto Christ, (London, Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1936), p. 160.

1. Robert Grimm, Analyse des termes ELEUTHERIA, ELEUTHEROS, ELEUTHEROUN dans le Nouveau Testament, (Neuchatel, Suisse, Faculte de Theologie, These de theologie biblique, janvier, 1949), p. 44.

2. Robert Leonard Child, "St. Paul's Doctrine of Grace and Freedom," in Studies in History and Religion, edited by Ernest A. Payne, (London and Redhill, Lutterworth Press, 1942), p. 123.

3. Rom. 8:29.

4. Rom. 8:29.

5. Rom. 8:20.

6. Rom. 9:11.

7. Rom. 1:2.

of himself as "called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus."¹ And he says that believers are chosen in Christ "before the foundation of the world."² Paul always sees all good as the result of God's action. It is God who pours his love into men's hearts.³ Holiness and sincerity come by the grace of God and not by the wisdom of earth.⁴ It is God who initiates the good work in the believer and will see it through to completion.⁵ It is God who keeps spirit, soul and body sound until the coming of the Lord.⁶ And not only good, but sin Paul lays to a force beyond himself:

"I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. . . . I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members."⁷

But Paul does not allow consistency to come between himself and action. For while he credits God with all good and even dismisses complete responsibility for evil from himself, he exhorts his readers to work and think as though all depends upon them and drives himself on through hardship and opposition as though his task had an essential role to fulfill in the expansion of Christianity. "Cast off the works of darkness and put on the

1. I Cor. 1:1.

2. Eph. 1:4.

3. Rom. 5:5.

4. II Cor. 1:12.

5. Phil. 1:6.

6. II Thes. 5:23.

7. Rom. 7:18-23. Cf. Rom. 5:12-14.

armor of light,"¹ he tells his readers. "Put off your old nature . . . and put on the new nature."² "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain."³ Single men and women should remain single that all their energies may be devoted to the work.⁴ All inherited and acquired assets are to be jettisoned if they impede gaining Christ.⁵ Even one's thoughts are to be disciplined.⁶ And Paul is not afraid to hold himself up as an example of this rigorous life.⁷ Paul urges his people on as though the ^{Kingdom (?)} work of heaven depends entirely upon the ^{work (?)} kingdom of man. He asserts the responsibility of the individual despite the inherent impossibility of natural response. And similarly Paul puts the blame for evil squarely on man's shoulders.⁸ Man's "choice is uncaused . . . a metaphysical Melchizedek without ancestry."⁹

1. Rom. 13:12.

2. Eph. 4:22-24.

3. I Cor. 15:58.

4. I Cor. 7:32-35.

5. Phil. 3:4-11.

6. Phil. 4:8, Col. 3:2.

7. II Cor. 11:16-33, Phil. 3:17, 4:9.

8. Rom. 1:18-2:11.

9. John Laird, On Human Freedom, Being the Forwood Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion given in the University of Liverpool, (London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1947), p. 30.

How does Paul reconcile these contradictions? Is it God or is it man that initiates good? Is it sin within man or is it man that must accept the responsibility for evil? Or more agonizing still, if it is God who chooses those who are to be saved, is man at fault because he is not chosen? Any person with a conviction of a God who is really God must face this dilemma:

"An ethical monotheism which maintains that God is omnipotent and foresees all the future together with the outcome of every possible action, cannot consistently avoid the conclusion that its God is morally responsible for the righteousness and unrighteousness of the actions of all his moral creatures."¹

Philosophy faces the same dilemma:

"A morally responsible man, like any other, is a limited, conditioned being, hemmed in, compelled. There are good reasons for whatever he does and his course can often be charted well in advance. Still he is free, a being whom nothing can make decide this way or that. Both statements seem absurd."²

Paul was acutely cognizant of the possibility that at this point insolent men would decry the supposed justice of God in order to make their own injustices palatable to their consciences.

Perhaps Paul accepted some solution such as the Princeton Catholic philosopher Maritain proposes:

"Mercy does not work against justice, but above it. God is just, and His grace quits only him who first withdraws himself from it. But God is merciful to whomsoever He will be and His pity goes out to whomsoever He will have it go: that is the privilege of His freedom. . . . So also, with regard to eternal life, it is not from man's effort, it is from the free mercy of God that comes the gift of grace—offered to all men and, of their own initiative, not accepted by some."³

1. Ibid., p. 150.

2. Paul Weiss, Man's Freedom, (New Haven, Connecticut, Yale University Press, 1950), p. 61.

3. Jacques Maritain, The Living Thoughts of Saint Paul,

But more likely Paul stretched the framework of his thought enough to admit the irreconcilables whole. God chooses whom he will, and man is responsible for not being chosen; some men strive their utmost to do good, and must surrender the praise for good accomplished to God. Certainly Paul could tumble this astounding mixture into a single sentence devoid of consequent thought: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."¹ This was the way the Pharisaic sect, of which Paul had been a member, handled the antinomy, as is known from the first century historian Josephus:

"But then as to the two other orders at first mentioned, the Pharisees are those who are esteemed most skilful in the exact explication of their laws, and introduce the first sect. These ascribe all to fate [or providence], and to God, and yet allow that to act what is right, or the contrary, is principally in the power of men, although fate does co-operate in every action. . . . But the Sadducees are those that compose the second order, and take away fate entirely, and suppose that God is not concerned in our doing or not doing what is evil; and they may act as they please."²

Later rabbis continued to approach the dichotomy in this same manner: "Everything is foreseen but the right of choice is granted, and the world is judged with goodness [or grace], and everything is in accordance with the preponderance of man's deeds."³

translated by Harry Lorin Binsse, (London, Cassell and Company, 1942), p. 121.

1. Phil. 2:12, 13.

2. Flavius Josephus, Wars of the Jews, II viii 14, translated into English by William Whiston in The Works of Flavius Josephus, (London, James S. Virtue, no date), p. 676.

3. Aboth, Chapter Three, Mishnah 15 (mid-third century), translated into English with notes, glossary, and indices by

Although Paul was not disturbed by logic in problems where logic was inapplicable, he flamed with indignation when men rebelliously impugned God for their own sorry estate. "But, who are you, a man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, 'Why have you made me thus?'"¹ Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for beauty and another for menial use?"¹ This passage, Romans 9:6-33, is the locus classicus for Paul's attitude toward predestination. Karl Barth, in the spirit of Paul, summarizes the Apostle's position:

"Whatever my fate may be, I can only give honour to Him. This is uprightness before God, and it contradicts all our petty, sophisticated questionings concerning why God is God. The man who fears lest the divine sovereignty may remove human responsibility, or desires that it should do so, must be reminded quite plainly that he stands before the judgement of God as a sinner. Is this a fact or not?"²

Does Paul's doctrine of predestination preclude the possibility of man's freedom? No. Does Paul's doctrine of man's freedom preclude the absolute sovereignty of God? No. Paul accepts both the sovereignty of God and the freedom of man. A clock tells time correctly if its hands move at constant speed in either direction; reality yields to analysis beginning with man's freedom or God's.

J. Israelstam, (London, the Soncino Press, 1935), pp. 38, 39.

1. Romans 9:19-21.

2. Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans, translated by Edwyn C. Hoskyns, (From the sixth edition; London, Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 83.

But a more penetrating question than that of the relationship between predestination and free will is the relationship between free will and freedom in Christ. These are not the same. Freedom in Christ has nothing to do with choice. Freedom is to do God's will. That is to say, freedom is not "to do" or "not to do" God's will. Freedom in the Pauline sense is never spoken of as a capacity to resist God. It is found only *ἐν Χριστῷ*, in obedience, in bondage, in servitude to Christ, never in revolt against him. Rebellion is sin and death, not freedom. When Paul says, "We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,"¹ it is not to be understood that the individual is gradually to cease exercising a "freedom" of decision against Christ until "His final freedom--the full realization of his manhood--is reached through a process of growth whereby the governing maxim of his life comes to be a complete and willing surrender to God instead of rebellion against Him,"² as Child maintains. Freedom in the Pauline sense cannot be "abused", for abused or misused freedom would be enfeeblement to sin. For if growth in Christ means the realization of final freedom, how can lack of growth also be freedom? Consequently, freedom is not expressed in oscillation between right and wrong, but solely in the choice of the right. The fact that man is dependent upon God for his freedom means that the problem of God's act of predestination and the individual's act of choice does not exist for the Christian. This is because the Christian finds his

1. Eph. 4:15.

2. Child, op. cit., p. 117.

freedom in God's grace. Without grace, man's freedom is an illusion—for he is bound to sin if not bound to God. With grace, man is free to know God. "Therefore human freedom and divine grace are not mutually exclusive; they do not as it were sum up or operate as two factors together, but they are a unity. Indeed one must say, divine grace creates man's noblest freedom."¹

This introduction is designed to prepare the stage for the investigation of the origin, application and significance of freedom—the study proper. It has been decided that the certain knowledge of Paul is found in ten of the thirteen epistles credited to him and in Luke's history of the primitive Church. The three pastoral letters are not excluded from any consideration at all, however, for they do reflect the Apostle's influence. It has been found that Paul's conception of freedom is too dynamic to be confined to the single term, and that he marshalls several words to its service as analogs and others as contributory helps. By comparison with the traditional ways of expressing separation from evil, freedom is seen to be unique in its freshness and pivotal in importance in the interpretation of Paul's evangel. And last of all, Christian freedom is seen to be distinct from the problem of philosophical determinism, and neither allied to it nor hampered by it.

1. Rudolf Bultmann, *Glauben und Verstehen*, Zweiter Band, (Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1952), p. 160.

Part One: The Origin of the Pauline Conception of Freedom

I. Paul's Rabbinic Training: Promise without Possibility

The most obvious place to begin the search for the origin of Paul's idea of freedom is in his rabbinic background. The formative influence which this discipline had on his entire outlook overwhelms all the other influences together.¹ Paul was "an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin."² His pre-Christian name Saul is a Jewish name, perhaps given him in honor of King Saul, the first regent of Israel, who was also a Benjaminite.³ His insistence that he is "a Hebrew born of Hebrews"⁴ removes the possibility that he had become a naturalized Hebrew by means of proselyte circumcision and baptism. Even as one despised and hounded by Jews because of his blasphemous Christianity Paul nonetheless declares that the Israelites are "my brethren, my kinsmen by race".⁵ Paul had studied under Gamaliel, the respected Pharisee and rabbi in

1. William David Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, (London, S. P. C. K., 1948), pp. 1-35.

2. Rom. 11:1, also Acts 21:39 and 22:3.

3. I Samuel 9:1, 2.

4. Philippians 3:5, II Corinthians 11:22.

5. Rom. 9:3, see also Acts 22:1.

Jerusalem,¹ perhaps living with his sister who resided in the city with her husband and son.² Paul became a Pharisee,³ either because of Gamaliel's influence or because he was "a son of Pharisees"⁴ who willingly acquiesced to parental influence.

Whatever was his motive for becoming a Pharisee, Paul entered into it with heart, head and hand, advancing "in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers,"⁵ and fanatic in it to the extent of persecuting its enemy, the embryonic Church.⁶

Tradition as old as Jerome⁷ says that Paul's parents came from Gischala in Galilee. If this is so, his parents would of course have spoken Aramaic, the language of that land, a Semitic tongue related to Hebrew, and would have used it at home in Tarsus in Cilicia, where their son was born, even though the language of Tarsus was Greek. Consequently, Paul would have spoken Aramaic as his native tongue and would have also absorbed Greek from an early age. Three times in the epistles Paul

1. Acts 22:3.

2. Acts 23:16.

3. Philippians 3:5.

4. Acts 23:6.

5. Galatians 1:14.

6. Philippians 3:6, cf. Acts 7:58 and 8:1, 22:20, and 9:1, 2.

7. Johannes Weiss, The History of Primitive Christianity, completed by Rudolf Knopf and translated by four friends and edited by Frederick C. Grant, Vol. I, (London, Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1937), p. 181.

momentarily forsakes his universally understood Greek for his mother's language, twice to say the child's cry "Abba", Father,¹ and once to borrow a liturgical phrase from the Palestinian Christian community, "Maranatha," our Lord, come.² By an astute switch of language, in one instance, Paul by speaking Greek to his Roman tribune captor accidentally proved that he was not a particular Egyptian renegade who led a band of assassins, and by speaking "Hebrew", that is, Aramaic, the vernacular of the city, proved to the incensed mob in the temple that he was not a Gentile, and so could not have desecrated the temple by his presence.³ Paul also undoubtedly read Hebrew, the language of school, synagogue, and the intelligentsia.

Rather,
the
orthodox

Paul was born a Jew, he was raised a Jew, he was trained a Jew, and was proud to be a Jew. So deep was the Jewish influence upon him that even as a Christian he lived within the Hebrew tradition except when that habit could be misconstrued as a surrender of his freedom in Christ. Judaism was the dominant factor in the formation of Paul's thinking.

A. Pharisaism: Background for Bondage

The orthodox Judaism of the type that Paul rigorously observed was known and perhaps named by its stringent attempts to separate itself apart from unrighteousness and uncleanness.

Pharisaism failed in this high ideal, and corrupted itself into

1. Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6.
2. I Corinthians 16:22.
3. Acts 21:37-22:2.

a society for imperious hypocrisy and fictitious piety. Jesus lashed at his wily Pharisaic persecutors with a fierceness approaching vituperation: "hypocrites",¹ "children of hell",² "blind guides",³ "fools",⁴ "tombs",⁵ "serpents . . . brood of vipers".⁶ The measure of Pharisaic perfidy was their iniquitous part in Jesus' crucifixion. But the Pharisees were never accused of syncretism,[†] of eclecticism,[†] of liberalism. They were literalists who would not move from what they took to be the meaning of the law, and would not permit anyone within their power or sphere of influence to depart from it without violent dissuasion. Paul was never broad-minded concerning the law, even as a Christian. He was an orthodox Palestinian-trained Pharisee who held that the law was life, the revealed will of God, and the only true guide to religion. Paul's conception of freedom must have arisen from within the context of revealed religion. Paul's intransigent convictions could never have been crushed from outside; their shattering points to an eruptive force from within. Judaism recognized that divine revelation was the uniqueness and the core of its heritage.

†† They
were so
accused
by the
Gentiles
perhaps.

Paul's conception of freedom could hardly have been an amalgam of the best of Hebrew religion with the best of Hellenistic religion and philosophy. Paul was not a liberal Jew; and had he been so he could not have become freedom's herald. Philo and

1. Matthew 23:13.

2. Matthew 23:15.

3. Matthew 23:16.

4. Matthew 23:17.

5. Matthew 23:27.

6. Matthew 23:33.

Strabo both testify that liberally-minded Jews were a well-known group, and Josephus declares that some Jews were even liberal enough to dissuade a certain King Izates from submitting to circumcision.¹ But Paul interpreted the law as an absolute requirement, and never held the position of some Hellenistic Jews that the law is only symbolic of the great principles of Judaism. He took his religion so literally that it became for him a bondage from which he thought that escape could come only by binding himself closer to the law. His dissatisfaction with a religion which had become a trap was intensified by contrast with the Hebraic idea that God is a God who delivers slaves from Egypt and who bursts the boundaries of nationalistic barriers to redeem all men. It was intensified particularly by the prophetic emphasis on the eventual salvation of all men, for he who was one of the elect of Israel did not have the experience of salvation within himself. Those who discount the importance of Paul's rabbinic training in the development of his idea of freedom underestimate the power of the Hebraic Scriptures to reveal God despite narrow orthodoxy. But there was no freedom in Pharisaism itself.

1. Rabbinism in Paul's Epistles

Paul wrote that he had been trained as a Pharisee and that he had attained a distinction in that study which advanced him beyond many of his contemporaries.² This forthright assertion may be

1. Philo, *De Migrat Abrah.* 260; Strabo, *Geography*, 16, 2, 37; Josephus, *Antt.*, 22, 2, 3f. References from Macgregor and Purdy, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

2. Galatians 1:14.

accepted as erring on the side of modesty. Of the Pharisees who became believers in Christ,¹ (including Joseph of Arimathea,² Nicodemus,³ and James the brother of the Lord⁴), Paul became the best known. His extant letters are laden with rabbinic method and the learning of years of rabbinic study, all of which lays bare the great debt he owes his heritage.

a. Paul's frequent use of allegory is rabbinic. The principal passages where he uses allegory are in the account of the wilderness wanderings of the Israelites under the leadership of Moses, which he uses to show the punishments for desiring evil;⁵ the veil which covered the brightness of Moses' face after receiving the law, which shows that law is transitory and that the Jews are blind;⁶ and the superior status of the children of Sarah to that of the children of Hagar, showing that the children of promise are more blessed than the children of law.⁷

b. Paul uses the rabbinic argumentum a fortiori to show that a God who cares about feeding an ox is all the more surely concerned about man's material requirements.⁸ Paul's older contemporary,

1. Acts 15:5.

2. Mark 15:43.

3. John 3:1.

4. Wilfred Lawrence Knox, St. Paul and the Church of Jerusalem, (Cambridge, The University Press, 1925), pp. 80-82.

5. I Cor. 10:1-11.

6. II Cor. 3:7-18.

7. Gal. 4:21-31. The content as well as the form of this allegory is rabbinic. "The use of allegorical interpretation, the Jewish idea of election, the contrast of the natural son and the son of promise, the 'upper Jerusalem' which is 'our mother', the application of Isaiah 54:1 to the history of Abraham and the persecution of Isaac by Ishmael, all these find parallels in Jewish writings." Henry St. John Thackeray, The Relation of St. Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought, (London, Macmillan and Co., 1900), p. 212.

8. I Cor. 9:9.

Philo of Alexandria, makes use of the same a fortiori argument to show that the God who requires a cloak taken in pledge to be returned before the cold of night is concerned about more than the cloak.¹ This argument, "but if . . . then how much more", was called "light and heavy", and stood first among the seven rules for the interpretation of Scripture which were ascribed to Hillel, the founder of the Pharisaic school.²

c. Paul uses legendary embellishments of the historical narrative to illustrate his meaning, that is, haggada. The most striking example of this is in his use of the phrase, "the supernatural Rock which followed them."³ This interpretation arose from a misunderstanding of Numbers 21:18, which reads, "--Sing to it! the well which the princes dug . . . And from the wilderness [they went on] to Mattanah . . ." The Targums (the Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Scripture which were used in Palestine in the first century), however, contained a reading which misinterpreted the hiatus and supplied, in effect, "it went on" instead of "they went on". Thus the legend arose that the Israelites were followed by the rock from which the well flowed, just as they were followed by the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day. So the legend arose of the rock which accompanied the Israelites, stopping when they stopped, and moving when they moved, supplying

1. De Somn. 1:16, de vict. off. 1. on Exodus 22:27.
2. Thackeray, op. cit., pp. 201, 202.
3. I Corinthians 10:4.
4. Thackeray, op. cit., pp. 204-208.

all their water.

Paul makes use of haggadic material in other places. For instance:

Paul's "very journey to Corinth was a procession of triumph in Christ, which manifested the fragrance of the knowledge of Him wherever Paul went (II Cor. 2:14 seqq.). The fragrance was at the same time the incense of the triumph of the sufferings of Jesus, offered in the person of the Apostle as a sacrificial fragrance to God, and the knowledge of God revealed in the Gospel, the fragrant spice which really brought life to the righteous and death to the wicked, as against the Torah for which the rabbis wrongly claimed that virtue. The wealth of haggadic allusion was worthy of the pupil of Gamaliel; it is difficult to suppose that Paul's Corinthian readers were very clear as to his meaning."¹

Another probable instance of the use of haggadic material:

"In this section the phrase 'weight of glory' must be drawn from a Hebrew original, even if the original be found in Paul's own Hebrew thought. The words $\pi\rho\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, $\delta\epsilon\lambda\eta\tau\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$, $\sigma\kappa\eta\nu\sigma$, $\epsilon\upsilon\delta\eta\mu\epsilon\iota\nu$ and $\epsilon\kappa\delta\eta\mu\epsilon\iota\nu$ appear only here in Paul. The same applies to the double compound $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\chi\alpha\tau\omicron\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ but this cannot be pressed. Of the words which can be pressed, the first is only found in 4 Maccabees; $\sigma\kappa\eta\nu\sigma$ once in Wisdom, $\epsilon\kappa\delta\eta\mu\epsilon\iota\nu$ and $\epsilon\upsilon\delta\eta\mu\epsilon\iota\nu$ do not appear in the LXX. They thus do not belong to the Greek Bible with which Paul would naturally be familiar. Nor is it easy to parallel Paul's reference to Ps. 116:10 in [II Corinthians] 4:13, where the reference is to the whole of the rest of the Psalm, the reader being left to complete the passage for himself in accordance with common rabbinical usage. It seems probable that we have here a rabbinical exposition of immortality current in Hellenistic circles before the time of Paul's mission to the Gentiles."²

Other New Testament writers made use of haggada, one indeed in Paul's name.³ Whether or not Paul was consciously using haggada, he did use it, and this is another mark of his rabbinic training.

1. Knox, (Church of the Gentiles), op. cit., pp. 129, 130.

2. Ibid., p. 143, note 2.

3. II Timothy 3:8, which supplies the names Jannes and Jambres, missing in the account according to Exodus 7-9.

d. Paul followed rabbinism when he made a point by an ingenious midrash on a single letter. "The promises were made to Abraham and his offspring," he says, emphasizing that the singular word "offspring" is used in a representative sense.¹ This means, says Paul, that the promises are not fulfilled in the physical descendants of Abraham, who are many, but in a single individual, and that individual is Christ. He also follows rabbinism in making wide use of the rhetorical question.² And in rabbinic fashion he adds commentary to text as one sentence: "Thus it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit."³ And he is insistent that even the Old Testament's more enigmatical statements are applicable to present day spiritual instruction.⁴ And finally, he abandons the original historical setting of Old Testament quotations wherever he can add to the dignity of his argument by clothing his ideas within biblical phrases.⁵ This is especially true of the Messianic texts, for the rabbis too disregarded context in these instances.⁶

"St. Paul was throughly a child of his time. In his mode of quotation, his neglect of the original context, his Messianic interpretation of passages which originally had no Messianic reference, and his occasional resort to one of the two opposite forms to which Jewish exegesis inclined--the straining of the letter . . . or the highly allegorical exposition--in all these the influence of the Rabbinic schools is unmistakable."⁷

1. Gal. 3:16, from Genesis 12:7.

2. Rom. 10:6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 11:1, 2, 4, 7, 11, 15.
Gal. 3:1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Eph. 4:9.

3. I Cor. 15:45.

4. Rom. 4:23, 15:4, I Cor. 10:6-11.

5. Rom. 10:6-13.

7. Thackeray, op. cit., p. 202.

6. Rom. 9:33 from Is. 28:16 and 8:14; Rom. 10:15 from Is. 52:7;
Rom. 11:26 from Is. 59:20f plus 27:9; Rom. 15:13 from Ps. 69:9.

Since Paul's letters show that he was deeply conditioned by his rabbinic background, an independent study of that background may shed light on what he meant by freedom. This investigation will concern itself with the Pharisaic party to which Paul belonged, making particular reference to subjects most pertinent to Paul's conception of freedom, and with the Jewish scriptures, the subject of rabbinic study and Paul's chief court of appeal.

2. The Pharisaic Party

The Pharisaic party arose in the age of Judaism: that is, that period of time after Judah, the southern part of Israel, followed the course of the northern kingdom and capitulated to the Babylonians in 586 B. C. Before this date, the people were called Hebrews and their religion Israel; after this date, Jews and Judaism.¹ As a result of the Maccabean Wars, which were fought in the name of Israel's God, it became more important to know just what was the relevance of the law to daily living, especially in regard to ceremonial purity. A group of scribes pled for the stricter observance of the Levitical ordinances. This group was dissimilar from like societies in admitting men to the party regardless of their class and in its emphasis on propagandizing its views. The adherents of this group became known as Pharisees.² Pharisaism is the term used to describe that interpretation of the law developed

1. Macgregor and Purdy, op. cit., p. 43.

2. Louis Finkelstein, The Pharisees, The Sociological Background of Their Faith, (Second Edition; Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946), Vol. I, pp. 73-81.

by these eminent legal experts, an interpretation which became as binding as the law itself. At its best, "Pharisaism was Prophecy in action".¹

"The devotion of the Pharisees to the traditional law, with its manifold regulations or ordinances (*halakot*), is signalized by Josephus (or his sources) in numerous passages . . . This was in fact their distinguishing characteristic--they were zealous partizans of the unwritten law. The fundamental issue in their controversy with the Sadducees was the obligation of traditional rules and observances for which there was no direct biblical authority. Herein lies the historical importance of the Pharisees. They mediated to the people the knowledge of the law, impressed upon them by precept its authority, and set them the example of punctilious observance of its minutiae. They were better able to do this because their adherents were drawn from various social classes, but principally, it appears, from that medium layer of society in which puritan movements in all religions have found their chief support."²

After the Pharisees grew to have political significance, a rival party called the Sadducees formed. They claimed to be within the tradition of the high priests, who were supposedly descended from Zadok, the first high priest in Solomon's temple. They tended to be aristocratic, conservative, literal in interpreting the law. They were wealthy landowners who continually pressed and plotted for the independence of the nation. The Pharisees were the successors of the Hasidim, or pious. They were orthodox but progressive; more loyal to the law of Moses than to ideals of political independence. In the course of the centuries, the Pharisaic party emerged dominant because its destiny was religious and not nationalistic. The hopes of the Sadducees for independence from Rome were much diminished by the horrible

1. Ibid., p. xvi.

2. George Foot Moore, Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, the Age of the Tannaim, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1927), Vol. I, pp. 66, 67.

reduction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70, and were all but demolished by the final loss of independence in A. D. 135. The Pharisaic teaching endured through these adverse times and became authoritative for modern Judaism by virtue of being representative of the consensus of scholarly opinion to survive.

The attitude of the better type of Pharisee is shown in their maxims, which are recognized as the fundamentals of Judaism:

"Simeon's memorable word [about 200 B. C.] was: 'The world rests upon three pillars, on the Torah, on the cultus, and on works of charity'—we may paraphrase, the knowledge of divine revelation, the worship of God, and deeds of lovingkindness to men. Antigonus of Socho, who received the traditional law from Simeon, said: 'Be not like slaves who serve their masters with the expectation of receiving a gratuity, but be like slaves who serve their masters without expectation of receiving a gratuity, and let the fear of Heaven be upon you', the oft repeated principle that duty should be done for God's sake, or for its own sake (because it is duty), not for reward of obedience. 'The man who fears the Lord delights greatly in His commandments' (Psalm 112:1): 'In His commandments, not in the reward of His commandments.'"¹

Christianity through Paul, modern Judaism, and Islam through its prophet (although "the ignorant, self-indulgent, uxorious Mohammed, who became the apostle to the Arabs, was no Paul of Tarsus either in his intellectual or in his moral attainments"²)—all derive a foundation from Pharisaism. While the Pharisees did their utmost to stifle the infant Church in its cradle, and while the Pharisees who became Christians did their utmost to reconvert Christianity to Judaism, and while both efforts failed by a frighteningly narrow margin, Christianity still retains the

1. Ibid., p. 35.

2. Finkelstein, op. cit., p. xii.

impress of Pharisaism as a coin retains the impress of the die from which it escapes. It is with some justification that a modern Jewish scholar boasts, "Fully half the world adheres to Pharisaic faith . . ."¹

The doctrinal distinctions between these sects revolved about their attitudes toward the law. The Sadducees regarded only the law as authoritative, and emphasized the Pentateuch as the central source of doctrine. The Pharisees, and Paul among them,² accepted the prophets, the writings, and the traditions of the fathers as well as the law. Because the authority of the sects differed, their beliefs differed. The Pharisees taught resurrection,³ and could appeal to Isaiah, "Thy dead shall live, their bodies shall rise. O Dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy!"⁴ whereas the Sadducees could not appeal beyond the Pentateuch.⁵ And also because their authorities were divergent, the Pharisees believed in judgement and angels and spirits, while the Sadducees rejected them.⁶ And the Pharisees had a higher conception of the sovereignty of God than the Sadducees, accepting fate as well as free will, and not just free will.⁷ Certainly as a Christian,

1. Ibid., p. ix.

2. Galatians 1:14.

3. Acts 23:8.

4. Isaiah 26:19.

5. Flavius Josephus, Jewish War, 2, 8, 14; Mt. 22:23, Mark 12:18, Luke 20:27.

6. Acts 23:8.

7. Josephus, op. cit., 2, 8, 14.

and perhaps even as a Pharisee, Paul would agree with Jesus' denunciation of the Pharisaic manipulation of tradition to contravene the commandments of God.¹ But any Pharisee would delight in Jesus' delicate exegesis of the Sadducees' own Pentateuch-- a midrash Jesus may indeed have borrowed from the Pharisees-- to prove that there is a resurrection: "Have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but also of the living; you are quite wrong."²

The Pharisaic midrashim upon the law were always supposedly implicit within the law, and therefore carried the authority of the law itself. Because of this the rabbis sometimes claimed extravagant authority for their interpretations: "It is more culpable to teach contrary to the precepts of the scribes, than contrary to the Torah itself."³ No restriction was to be placed upon the people which was not bearable, but there is no doubt that some of the regulations were unendurable and burdensome. Such was Jesus' opinion: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice. They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger."⁴ As a practicing

1. Mark 7:3, 5, 8, 9, 13; Matthew 15:2, 3, 6.

2. Mark 12:26, 27 and parallels, on Exodus 3:6.

3. Sanhedrin 11, 3, from the Mishnah, quoted in Emil Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People*, translated by Sophia Taylor and Peter Christie, (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1885), Second Division, Vol. II, p. 12.

4. Matthew 23:2-4.

Pharisee, Paul would have to struggle with these minutiae of application, adaptation and interpretation as with the law itself, knowing all the time, as he himself later confessed, that "all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed be every one who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, and do them.'"¹ The Pharisaic interpretation of the law was an important factor in explaining the mounting pressure which drove Paul closer and closer to "wretchedness"² --and to emancipation.

The noted Jewish scholar previously referred to maintains that the Pharisaic doctrine of the resurrection was "democratic", as he anachronously puts it. If so, resurrection as a biblical doctrine was reemphasized not on the Egyptian basis of the resurrection of the powerful but on the Hebraic basis of the resurrection for the righteous, "be they rich or poor, Jew or Gentile, noble or plebeian."³ Finkelstein prudently does not elaborate upon his oblique claim that the Pharisees taught that the "Gentile" along with the elect of Israel might also be resurrected if they too were righteous, although he does go so far as to say:

"Pharisaism won its world victory, as it won its initial victory in Palestine, not through a promise, but by a fulfilment. Its doctrines did not offer redemption: they brought it. They were in effect an announcement of 'freedom to all the earth'. The submerged were the equals of the patricians; women were the equals of men; slaves were the equals of masters. All alike

1. Galatians 3:10, from Deuteronomy 27:26.

2. Romans 7:24.

3. Finkelstein, op. cit., pp. 147, 148.

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the Pharisees
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were children of God, created in His Image. The mere declaration of such principles aroused the latent sense of human dignity in the breast of the downtrodden, and he gratefully embraced the faith which brought him such salvation and comfort."¹

Of course the Pharisees would agree that the Gentile might become righteous too—but only if he became righteous according to the law, underwent circumcision, and in all ceremonial and religious matters pledged loyalty to Judaism. The Gentile could become righteous only if he first became a Jew. But the fact remains that the Pharisees taught that God identified himself with the aspirations of the despised, and that his promise of resurrection was not unconditionally denied to some. This Pharisaic teaching on resurrection is conformable to the idea which Paul was later to adopt as Christian, namely, that all men without distinction are eligible to receive God's grace and to be saved, but on a basis of righteousness granted without reference to the law. The Pharisaic doctrine of God's impartiality in resurrection fits in with Paul's doctrine of the universal accessibility of God apart from law. It was the law itself which stood between all men and God, and when Paul realized that this blessing-become-bondage had been abrogated through Christ, then the way was made plain for the liberation of all men. Not only the Gentile but the Jew as well could come to know God without recourse to the law of Moses.

Two rabbis, Hillel and Shammai, contemporaries of Herod the Great (37-4 B. C.), emphasized interpretations of the law which were sufficiently divergent to cause a recognizable schism within

1. Ibid., p. xiii.

the Pharisaic sect itself. But it was not until after these two men had died that their variant emphases broke into distinct schools, the "House of Hillel" and the "House of Shammai".

Hillel was a teacher from Babylon who was famous for his broad-minded and humane interpretation of the law. He moved to Palestine having developed in Babylon a reputation for wise aphorisms and genial temperament which has enhanced the regard in which he is held among Jews and Christians to this day. He infused into Judaism a new impulse toward the study of the law. Shammai in contrast was more rigorous and stringent, almost always deciding for the harsher interpretation of the law.

Gamaliel, Hillel's grandson¹ and Paul's teacher², was "one of the most celebrated teachers of Judaism".³ Most of his legal interpretations were marked by sympathy and open-mindedness. He ruled that soldiers were to be exempted from the stricter sabbath rules in time of war. Gentiles were to have the same rights as Jews in gleaning after the harvest, and were to be saluted with the shalom alechem even on pagan feast days. He made regulations protecting divorcees and widows. And he encouraged the reading of Greek literature, although he also said that he who acquires the law acquires all things. One of his less sympathetic beliefs was that little children were excluded from the hereafter if they were the children of the heathen.⁴ But the author of Acts

1. Aboth 1, 16.

2. Acts 22:3.

3. Johannes Weiss, op. cit., vol. I, p. 185.

4. Tos. Sanhedrin 13, 1.



describes Gamaliel as a member of the Sanhedrin who was "held in honor by all the people".¹ He is there quoted as advising a moderate policy toward the new Messianic sect, "keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this undertaking is of men, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God."² Paul's forceful endeavors to suppress the new sect of the followers of Jesus contrast sharply with his teacher's caution, so sharply that one suspects that the youthful zealot came to see something in Christianity that his master did not suspect--antilegalism. But this only reinforces the conclusion that Paul was the product of Judaism's noblest school, standing in the main stream of Jewish tradition as interpreted and applied by Hillel and Gamaliel.

3. Pharisaism and the Law

The law, the torah, was the whole content of revealed religion, or more specifically, the law of Moses as given in the Pentateuch and the traditions. "Torah in one aspect is the vehicle, in another and deeper view it is the whole content of revelation."³ When the word is capitalized, Law may signify the whole Judaic religion.

"The Law was to the Pharisee the revelation of the nature of God Himself; for the Holy One Himself observed the Law, which He had given to Israel, and indeed to all mankind, as the greatest of all His blessings."⁴ Freedom according to Paul can be appreciated best

1. Acts 5:34.

2. Acts 5:38, 39.

3. Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 263.

4. Knox, (Church of Jerusalem), op. cit., p. 8.

by contrasting the Jewish attitude toward the law. Each one of the value judgements which the rabbis placed upon the law Paul articulately or implicitly inverts in his elucidation of freedom.

a. The law was eternally fixed and permanent. For the rabbis it was "an uncontested axiom that every syllable of Scripture had the verity and authority of the word of God. It followed that the contents of the sacred books were throughout consentaneous, homogeneous. There were not only no contradictions in them but no real differences. The notion of progressive revelation was impossible: the revelation of Moses was complete and final; no other prophet should ever make any innovation in the law."¹ Circumcision, the central observance of Judaism, (taking precedence over even Sabbath restrictions because the latter must be suspended so that a child whose eighth day of life falls on the Sabbath may be circumcised), which is not only the sign of the covenant, but the covenant itself, is "everlasting."² The law was pre-mundane, existing before creation. "'The Lord created me [wisdom or law] at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth."³ In this personalized form, it participated in creation, for "when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master workman."⁴ The rabbis, having equated

1. Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 239. Deut. 4:2, 13:1-5, Lev. 27:34.

2. Genesis 17:10, 13. 3. Prov. 8:22, 23. See to verse 31.

4. Proverbs 8:29, 30.

wisdom with law, and by midrashim "more subtle than convincing" concluded that the law was in existence before the world was created, that it was the agent of creation, and that it was the purpose of creation. Thus the beginning and end of creation itself is law, religion, Judaism.¹

b. The law was God's complete revelation to man.

"The foundation of Judaism is that religion is revealed. What man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man, he has made known in one form or another by revelation. Specific commandments had been given to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Jacob; to Moses the complete revelation was given once and for all. The prophets who came after him repeated, explained, emphasized, applied, what was revealed to Moses; they added nothing to it. The revelation to Moses was in part embodied in writing in the Pentateuch, in part transmitted orally from generation to generation in unbroken succession down to the schools of the Law in which tradition was defined, formulated, and systematized. The whole of religion was revealed—'nothing was kept back in heaven'—and the whole content of revelation was religion."²

With the giving of the law the age of inspiration had ceased. In Maccabean times the age of the prophets had also come to an end, for "there was great distress in Israel, such as there had not been since the time when the prophets ceased to appear to them."³ Although several passages express a hope for the restoration of a prophet to Israel,⁴ it was a hope not for something new, but for the application of what had been revealed. So, then, even while the law was regarded as complete, the people looked forward to its consummation.

1. See Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, "The Perpetuity of the Law," pp. 263-280.

2. Ibid., p. 112.

3. I Maccabees 9:27.

4. I Maccabees 4:46, 14:41, Psalm 74:9.

c. The law was appointed for man's salvation. Paul testifies that this was the purpose of the Mosaic law for the individual when he said, "Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on the law shall live by it".¹ And in the same passage he implies that it was also thought to be the way of national salvation--to draw the Messiah from heaven.² For the rabbis had said that if the law were kept perfectly for only one Sabbath the Son of David would come immediately.³ Hillel said, "The more teaching of the law, the more life; the more school, the more wisdom; the more counsel, the more reasonable action. He who gains a knowledge of the law gains life in the world to come".⁴ And there are several places in the Apocalypse of Baruch where the law is regarded as bringing salvation to man. For instance, "for the righteous justly hope for the end, and without fear depart from this habitation, because they have with Thee a store of works preserved in treasures".⁵ And, "Also (as for) the glory of those who have now been justified in My law, who have had understanding in their life, and who have planted in their heart the root of wisdom, then their splendour will be glorified in changes, and the form of their face will be turned into the light of their beauty, that they may be able to acquire and receive the world which does not die, which is then promised to them."⁶

1. Romans 10:5.

2. Romans 10:6.

3. Ta'anit 64 a.

4. Aboth 2, 7, quoted by Emil Schürer, A History of the Jewish People, translated by Sophia Taylor and Peter Christie, Second Division, Volume II, (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1885), p. 44.

5. Baruch 14:12.

6. Baruch 51:3.

Baruch also explains how Hezekiah was saved from destruction because of his righteous acts which won him favor with God.¹

The rabbis thought that it was self-evident that the law had been instituted for man's salvation: "Johanan ben Zakkai, the unrivaled master of all branches of Jewish learning," said, "If you have learned a great deal of Torah, do not claim credit for yourself, for that is what you were made for."² But they also taught that the value of the law would disappear if it were used with only a selfish motive. "Suppose you say, I am learning the Torah that I may get rich, or that I may be called Rabbi, or that I may gain reward (from God), the teaching of the Scripture is, 'To love the Lord thy God' (Deut. 11:13); whatever you do, do it only out of love."³ Also: "Suppose you say, I will learn Torah in order to be called learned, in order to have a seat in the academy, in order to have endless life in the World to Come, the teaching is, 'To love the Lord thy God'. Honor and blessing follow the study that is not done for their sake."⁴

1. Baruch 63.

2. Aboth 2, 8, quoted in Moore, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 245.

3. Sifre Deut. paragraph 41, quoted from Moore, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 241.

4. Sifre Deut. paragraph 48, quoted from Moore, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 241. See also Nedarim 62 a, Berakot 17 a, Deut. 10:12, 13.

d. The law was the way of salvation. The rabbis were very conscious of the presence and the power of sin. "Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin!'"¹ "Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins."² The rabbis said that God dares call no man a saint until he is dead, because "God puts no trust in his holy ones."³ And Rabbi Simeon ben Lakish said, "You are not to say (merely) that he who commits the physical act is called an adulterer; one who commits adultery with his eyes is called adulterer, as it is said 'The eye of the adulterer.'"⁴ Sin results in fear. Rabbi Ishmael said, "So long as a man does not sin he is feared, as soon as he sins he himself is in fear."⁵ All those who sin experience fear: Adam,⁶ Israel,⁷ David,⁸ Saul,⁹ Isaiah.¹⁰ And sin results in death for all men. Adam sinned, and all men die; but this is not unjust because

1. Proverbs 20:9.
2. Ecclesiastes 7:20, cf. I Kings 8:46, II Esdras 8:35.
3. Job 15:15.
4. On Job 24:15, cited by Moore, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 268.
5. Cited by Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 469.
6. Genesis 3:8.
7. Exodus 34:30.
8. II Samuel 17:2.
9. I Samuel 28:5.
10. Isaiah 6:5.

every man confirms his sinfulness by being his own Adam. A late midrash on the consequence of Adam's sin is in parable form:

"A woman who had transgressed the law was confined in prison. There she gave birth to a son and brought him up, and there she died. After a time, as the king was walking past the door of the prison, the son cried, O my lord the king, here I was born, here I grew up; for what sin I was put here I do not know. The king answered, For the sin of thy mother."¹

But the law is God's appointed remedy for sin and its consequences. "My sons, I created for you the evil impulse; I created for you the Law as an antiseptic."² The law became the way of salvation, for by obeying it, one could store up treasuries of righteousness to be credited to one's account. The "commercial view" of salvation on the basis of good works is especially prominent in Ecclesiasticus and II Esdras. "For you have a treasure of works laid up with the Most High, but it will not be shown to you until the last times."³ "For the upright, who have many good deeds laid up with [the Lord], will receive their reward in consequence of their own deeds."⁴ "For the righteous justly hope for the end, and without fear depart from this habitation, because they have with thee a store of works preserved in treasuries."⁵

The rabbis said little of freedom per se, and they almost never enlarged upon what little is said of freedom per se in the Old Testament. The word freedom is used by the rabbis sig-

1. Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 475.

2. Sifre Deut., paragraph 45, on Deut. 11:18, cited in Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 490. Cf. Kiddushin 30 b, Baba Batra 16 a.

3. II Esdras 7:77.

4. II Esdras 8:33.

5. Baruch 14:12, cf. Romans 2:5, "But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself . . ."

nificantly only ten times in the entire twenty-four volumes of the Soncino Babylonian Talmud, according to the extensive listings of references in the index volume. And in these few instances, it is sometimes understood in only its most elementary and literal sense. For example:

"All authorities agree that the word deror means freedom [in Lev. 25:10]. What does this tell us? As it has been taught: The word deror means freedom. R. Judah said: What is the significance of the word deror? [The freedom of] one who dwells [medayyer] where he likes and can carry on trade in the whole country."¹

But where freedom is used metaphorically by the rabbis, it is used of a freedom from sin that is achieved by obedience to the law.

"To stimulate the better self to contend against the worse; occupy one's self intensely with the word of God; confess one's faith in the one true God, and the duty of loving him with all one's being, renewing thus the assumption of the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven; meditate on the hour of death (and the judgement of God)—these are the weapons with which victory may be won in this battle that man wages for the freedom of his soul."²

"R. Jeremiah [c. A. D. 320] questioned R. Zera [c. A. D. 300]: What is meant by, The small and the great are there [sc. the next world]; and the servant is free from his master? But [it means that] he who humbles himself for the sake of the Torah in this world is magnified in the next; and he who makes himself a servant to the [study of the] Torah in this world becomes free in the next."³

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1. Rosh Hashanah 9 b, Soncino edition, p. 35.
 2. A paraphrase of Berakot 5 a by Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 491.
 3. Baba Mezi'a 85 b, Soncino edition, p. 490.

Rabbi Nehuniah ben ha-Kanah (end of the first century A. D.) said:

"Every one who takes upon himself the yoke of the Law (the obligations of religion) is liberated from the yoke of empire (the burden of foreign government) and from the yoke of the world (the cares of daily life); but whosoever throws off the yoke of the Law is subjected to both of these."¹

X Rabbi Joshua ben Levi, about A. D. 250, said concerning Exodus 32:16 that heruth should be read for haruth, that is "freedom" for "graven". By this exegetical device Joshua indicates that the law is synonymous with freedom. The citation reads, "And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, freedom (for graven, חרות for חרות)."² Joshua continues, "For there is no free man for thee but he that occupies himself with the study of the Torah; and whoever regularly occupies himself with the study of the Torah, lo, he is exalted . . ."³ Therefore the rabbinical view of the law was not only that it was instituted for man's salvation, but that it was the way of salvation as well, for by its prophylactic the infection of sin was antisepticized.

e. The law was effective in obtaining salvation. It was possible for the rabbis to believe this because their concept of law included grace, the favorable disposition of God which would make up for any deficiency of righteousness as a gift to his people.

1. Aboth 3, 5, cited by Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 465.

2. This exchange of Hebrew words was an exegetical short cut to the interpretation the Rabbi wished to convey, and is not intended to indicate a variant in the text.

3. Aboth 6, 2, Soncino edition, pp. 79, 80.

This idea of salvation by free grace was restricted to Israel because it was the elect nation.¹ Deliverance was to come if Israel rose to God's demands and lived righteously, and yet it was to come even if Israel turned her back on God's commands. The purpose of God could not be thwarted by man's disobedience. Rabbi Joshua ben Levi says, "If ye are worthy I will hasten it; and if ye are not worthy, 'in its time.'"²

It was also possible for the individual to be justified because God's justice was tempered with his mercy. "Should a man ask you, If Adam had not sinned, and had eaten of that tree, would he have lived and endured forever? answer him, There was Elijah, who did not sin; he lives and endures forever."³ This hope was based on the conviction that God's mercy was as great as his majesty,⁴ in accordance with the prophetic insight.

"For thou art our Father,
though Abraham does not know us
and Israel does not acknowledge us;
thou, O Lord, art our Father,
our Redeemer from of old is thy name."⁵

"And there is no other god besides me,
a righteous God and a Savior;
there is none besides me."⁶

1. M. Sanhedrin 10, 1; Sanhedrin (11, 1) 90 a ff., Jer. Sanhedrin 27 b ff.

2. Jer. Ta'anit 63 d, on Isaiah 60:22, cited by Moore, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 351.

3. Pesikta 76 a, cited by Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 474.

4. Ecclesiasticus 3:18.

5. Isaiah 63:16.

6. Isaiah 45:21.

"I will not execute my fierce anger,
I will not again destroy Ephraim;
for I am God and not man,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come to destroy."¹

"The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin . . ."²

It was from this hope that the idea arose that the "Father in heaven" (a phrase originated by the rabbis) would tip the scale in favor of mercy for those whose balance is in equilibrium.³

"For in truth there is no one among those who were ever born who has not acted wickedly, or among those who have grown up who have not sinned. For in this, Lord, your uprightness and goodness will be declared, if you have mercy on those who have no stock of good deeds."⁴ That the rabbis were sure that God would do this is indicated by this quotation: "When God showed Moses all the treasuries of merit prepared for the righteous, one for those who give alms, one for those who provide for orphans, and so on, Moses saw one large treasury and asked whose it was. God replied, To the man who has (merit), I give of his own; and on him who has

1. Hosea 11:9.

2. Exodus 34:6, see also Psalm 116. Psalm 51 is the finest Old Testament example of a repentance based on mercy.

3. Tos. Sanhedrin 13, 3; Rosh Hashanah 16 b--17 a.

4. II Esdras 8:35, 36.

none I bestow gratis, as it is written, 'And I will show favor to whom I will show favor' (Exod. 33:19)."¹

The confidence in God's merciful disposition toward his people was not, however, characteristic for nomistic Judaism. Their religion did contain elements of an attenuated grace, but it was regarded only as the resort of the last extremity, and only for those who had zealously done their best to carry "the yoke of the law" (a phrase invented by the Jews themselves²). Grace was extended to men who had merited this extra favor of God in virtue of their past deeds of righteousness.

f. The law was the exclusive way of salvation. The law is the only way that God has revealed himself to man, and this truth was guarded by the rabbis with great tenacity. Israel alone was God's elect nation; and Israel in turn recognized the gods of no other countries. The worship of other gods, intermarriage with people who worshipped other gods, even eating according to foreign dietary customs, were all strictly forbidden and severely punished. Whoever failed to submit to the rite of circumcision, the sign of the covenant, was excommunicated and severed from God. "Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."³ Many of the bloody reforms of Jewish rulers from

1. Tanhuma, Ki tissa, paragraph 16.
2. Ps. Sal. 7:8; Baruch 41:3; cf. Galatians 5:1.
3. Genesis 17:14.

Hezekiah to the Maccabees were battles waged in the name of God against syncretism and eclecticism. All these restrictive measures were undertaken not merely to preserve but to demonstrate the exclusiveness of Judaism. The law was the only revelation of God given to man, and it could not be broadened by false liberalism or by indiscriminating toleration.

g. The law was applicable and available to all men.

"The Jews were the only people in their world who conceived the idea of a universal religion, and labored to realize it by a propaganda often more zealous than discreet, which made them many enemies; and precisely in the age when the 'anti-universalistic' law was enthroned in the completest authority in Judaism was its expansion at its height."¹

One midrash says that at Sinai the law was delivered in the seventy languages of the world, but that only Israel received it. The law, then, was destined for all the nations, and ultimately would be received by all nations, for "it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh."² Somehow the tension between the doctrine of the election of Israel and the doctrine of Gentile accessibility to God had to be reconciled.

"Particularism was written plain upon the pages of the Old Testament; in emphatic language the Scriptures imposed upon the true Israelite the duty of separateness from the Gentile world. Gentiles might indeed be brought in, but only when they acknowledge the prerogatives of Israel and united themselves with the Jewish nation. If premonitions of a different doctrine were to be found, they were couched in the mysterious language of prophecy; what seemed to be fundamental for the present was the doctrine of the special covenant between Jehovah and His chosen people."³

1. Moore, op. cit., Vol. 1, pp. 22, 23.

2. Joel 2:28.

3. Machen, op. cit., p. 17.

The law was made available to all men by means of proselytism. The Pharisees said that Abraham had been a proselyte. Ruth had been a proselyte.¹ In a number of places it was prophesied that all nations would come up to Mount Zion,² and consequently the Pharisees set about to convert the heathen to Judaism. Jesus testified to scribal and Pharisaic zeal in winning converts when he said, "you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte".³ Proselytes were received even though their knowledge was imperfect and their observance faulty. These could become "proselytes of the gate" and were known as *σεβόμενοι*, God-fearers.⁴ But those who submitted to circumcision and baptism and to the stringency of the law were regarded by most rabbis as full heirs of the promises with natural born Jews. These converts were known as "proselytes of righteousness", and had to swear utter fealty to the Mosaic law and its penalties. "As the native born Jew takes upon him (to obey) all the words of the Law, so the proselyte takes upon him all the words of the Law. The authorities say, if a proselyte takes upon himself to obey all the words of the Law except one single commandment, he is not to be received."⁵ And

1. Ruth 2:12.

2. Isaiah 2:2, 3, 11:10.

3. Matthew 23:15.

4. Acts 13:43, 50, 17:4, 17.

5. Sifra, Kedoshim Perek 8, cited by Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 331. Cf. Galatians 5:2.

a second century A. D. instruction to the candidate for proselytism says, "Know that until you came to this status you ate fat without being liable to extirpation, you profaned the sabbath without being liable to death by stoning, but now if you eat fat you are liable to extirpation, and if you profane the sabbath you are liable to stoning."¹ The rabbis never glimpsed the possibility of a universalism based on any other means than the law.

The devout Jew believed that there was one thing in the world to which he could devote his heart, soul, and might; that there was one thing which was immutable and perfect; and that was the law. The law was the will of God, the only will of God, the way of the will of God, the effective will of God, and through the Jews the will of God for every man and nation. It was the material cause, the formal cause, the efficient cause, and the final cause of true religion. Pascal makes ironic note of the Jewish ardor in an epigrammatic sentence: "Zeal of the Jewish people for the law, especially after there were no more prophets."² The Jews stood ready to fight and die for the law. The Maccabean revolt lasting through four generations of religious revolutionists began over an instance of the law's violation--when the aged priest Mattathias slaughtered an envoy of King Antiochus for inviting sacrifice upon a heathen altar.³ So fanatic was the reverence for the law in that long struggle that

1. Yebamot 47 a--b, cited by Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 333.

2. Pascal, Blaise, Pensees, The Provincial Letters, translated by W. F. Trotter and Thomas M'Crie, (New York, The Modern Library, Random House, 1941), fragment 701, p. 236.

3. I Maccabees 2:15-28.

at the first the Jews would not fight on a sabbath even to defend themselves, and about 1000 of them permitted themselves to be killed in caves rather than profane the Holy Day with armed resistance.¹

It was against such tyrant force of stubborn conviction and closed mind, against the despotism of vested religion and entrenched dogma, against this background of bondage, that the primitive Church, still uncertain and undecided if Paul's resolute and intransigent declaration of the law's final end was essential to the new faith, began its struggle for that freedom which has ever since been resurgent in Christianity.

B. The Hebraic Scriptures: Matrix of Emancipation

The chief indication of rabbinic influence on Paul is in his extensive use of the Old Testament to prove that his points are within the arena of revealed religion and harmonious with the truths which God has already made known. Paul constantly refers to the Old Testament to refute the law, and succeeded in wresting his antagonists' weapon from their hands. Because, then, Paul made use of the Old Testament against the teaching of his former colleagues, the Old Testament by itself must be a major source of this idea of freedom. Paul's divergent interpretation of the law is drawn from the very collection of Jewish writings which the rabbis defined as the law itself. In what ways, then, did Paul's conception of freedom derive from the Hebraic Scriptures?

Paul was able to upset the traditional attitude toward the law

1. I Maccabees 2:29-41.

only after the principle of its final end was made believable for him by his staggering conviction that Jesus Christ had appeared to him from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead was for Paul the central and inescapable argument that God himself had vindicated and certified Jesus Christ as his ultimate revelation. Whatever was not in accord with the significance of Christ—even if it be the law of God, the Jew's chief possession—had to be reassessed in the light of this overwhelming development. Paul's debt to Jesus will be investigated in a later chapter where it can be set into its proper chronological sequence, but here an attempt will be made to evaluate the significance of the Old Testament itself in preparing Paul for the shattering discovery he was to make and to propound.

1. Paul's Use of the Hebraic Scriptures

The rabbis, the school, and the synagogue had done their good work thoroughly: Paul emerged a master of the Hebraic Scripture. Indeed his knowledge of the Scripture and his loyalty to it saved him from "the dreamy, unreal allegories of Alexandria and the casuistical interpretations of the Palestinian scribe."¹ Something of the inner significance of the Scriptures had fastened upon the keen scholar, so that he was able to adhere to them even when former masters and associates damned his fresh insight as blasphemy, and sought his blood for his errors.

Paul was able to call Scripture quotations to mind readily, and could piece them together like a mosaic when he was working with Old Testament concepts—as, for instance, in Romans 9, 10, 11,

1. Thackeray, op. cit., p. 181.

when he makes more than forty allusions to the Septuagint within ninety verses. Altogether there are seventy-eight acknowledged citations from the Greek version of the Old Testament in Paul's letters and in those credited to him; that is, seventy-eight citations which are introduced in such manner as οὕτως, καθὼς γέγραπται, γέγραπται, Μωυσῆς or Δαυεὶδ λέγει, εἶπεν, λέγει, εἶπεν ἡ γραφή, or which clearly appear from context to be citations or which agree with the Septuagint verbatim. Seventy-one of these seventy-eight are found in the four "controversial" letters,¹ the same letters in which the idea of freedom is also most frequent. This is another reason, in addition to that of length alone, for supposing that Romans, I and II Corinthians, and Galatians are most expressive of the quintessence of Paulinism. Ephesians has five of the remaining formal quotations, and I and II Timothy each one. Besides these formal quotations, there are almost as many allusions to the Septuagint, and these are found in all of Paul's letters and in all of those attributed to him. There are also a number of quotations which Paul evidently translated into Greek from the Hebrew Scripture or from the Aramaic Targums himself.

Like his rabbinic teachers, Paul made large use of the Prophets and the Hagiographa as well as the Pentateuch. In a number

1. Romans, forty-two; I Corinthians, thirteen; II Corinthians, six; Galatians, ten. In these same four letters the word freedom and its cognates appear twenty-six out of the twenty-eight times they appear in all Paul's letters.

of places he expressly says that he is quoting David,¹ Isaiah,² Hosea,³ or Moses.⁴ A number of Pauline quotations are alleged to have come from the apocryphal writings. But this is not at all sure, and alternative sources in the Old Testament can be hypothesized.⁵ I Corinthians 2:9 is more probably paraphrased from Isaiah 64:4 than from The Secrets of Elias; Galatians 6:15 is more likely originally Pauline than from an apocryphal work concerning Moses; and Ephesians 5:14 may have been from the hymn to which the Apostle refers immediately thereafter instead of from an apocalypse of Jeremiah. But it is also known that Paul as well as other New Testament writers was familiar with the non-canonical book, The Wisdom of Solomon. Paul nowhere makes a direct quotation from Wisdom, but his condemnation of idolatry,⁶ his conviction that God is merciful as well as irresistible,⁷ and the doctrine of the relation of soul and body,⁸ and a number of minor parallels indicate that he had been influenced by it.⁹

1. Romans 4:6, 11:9.
2. Romans 9:27, 29, 10:16, 20.
3. Romans 9:25.
4. Romans 10:5, 19.
5. Thackeray, op. cit., pp. 240-248.
6. Romans 1:18-32 and Wisdom 13, 14.
7. Romans 9:19-23 and Wisdom 12, 15:7.
8. II Corinthians 5:1, 4 and Wisdom 9:15.
9. Thackeray, op. cit., pp. 223-231.

By rabbinic studies Paul had stored up a comprehensive knowledge of the Scriptures, and had received training to use them effectively. He may have made use of an hypothesized "testimony book", an early written collection of Old Testament quotations and prophecies pertaining to the Messiah.¹ The "testimony book" would explain why some Old Testament citations are repeated in the New Testament, but could not by itself substitute for the breadth of Old Testament knowledge which Paul displays. Three of Paul's exegeses of the Old Testament recorded in his letters have direct bearing on his concept of freedom: the obsolescence of the law even before it was instituted by Moses, the freedom of the child of promise on a non-legal basis according to the allegory of Sarah and Hagar, and the escape of the children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. These three interpretations of the Old Testament will be considered in another place.

2. The Meaning of "Freedom" in the Hebraic Scriptures

Did Paul make direct use of the idea of freedom as it is found in the Hebraic Scriptures? In only one instance does he quote the word as if it came from the Old Testament: "But what does the scripture say? 'Cast out the slave and her son; for the son of the slave shall not inherit with the son of the free woman'";² and

1. James Rendel Harris and Vacher Burch, Testimonies, (Cambridge, The University Press, Vol. I, 1916, Vol. II, 1920), Vol. II, pp. 1-42 especially. See also C. H. Dodd, According to the Scriptures, and Stather Hunt, Primitive Gospel Sources.

2. Galatians 4:30, from Genesis 21:10.

in that instance his use of "the son of the free (ἐλεύθερος) woman" is only a paraphrase for "my son Isaac", for "the son of the free woman" does not occur in the Genesis passage at all. In this case Paul added his own commentary to the Old Testament passage as though it were an actual part of the passage itself, a typical rabbinic device for bringing out a particular meaning implicit within the verse. He added the idea of freedom to an Old Testament context which substantiated the idea, but a context which could never by itself have yielded the idea. In this way Paul strengthened his argument for freedom from the Old Testament without claiming its explicit authority.

It is a sound generalization to make that the Hebrews never developed an idea of freedom which was abstract or conceptual.

In the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures which Paul almost always used, the words ἐλεύθερος, ἐλευθερία and ἐλευθερώ are made use of in the following ways:

a. Freedom from servitude for the individual.¹

1) Freedom of the slave on the seventh year. The Hebrews were forbidden to enslave their own people,² and aliens who became enslaved were to be freed to "go out free" on the seventh year of their captivity. In every instance, ἐλεύθερος translates

רָפָא

1. References to Greek words in the Septuagint are taken from Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, A Concordance to the Septuagint, Two Volumes, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1897). References are given in the order in which the books occur in the Septuagint.

2. Leviticus 25:39-46, especially verse 42, "For they are my servants, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves."

3. Exodus 21:2, 5, Deuteronomy 15:12, 13, 18, Jeremiah 41:9 (Masoretic text 34:9), 14, 16.

2) Freedom of the slave because of injury done him. A slave shall "go free" for a physical injury done him by his master.¹

In these two instances ἐλευθερος translates נָפְשׁוֹ.

"If a man lies carnally with a woman who is a slave, betrothed to another man and not yet ransomed or given her freedom² (ἐλευθερία

translating נָפְשׁוֹ) . . . they shall not be put to death,

because she was not free (ἀπελευθερώ translating

נָפְשׁוֹ).³ If a man marries a slave and then has no delight in

her, he must let her go free (ἐξαποστελεῖς αὐτήν

ἐλευθεράν translating נָפְשׁוֹ).⁴ The Septuagint

translators would better have rendered the Hebrew נָפְשׁוֹ

"where she will" with θέλω.

3) Freedom out of generosity. Judith ". . . set her maid free (ἐλευθερος) . . ."⁵ when she was about to die.

The book exists in a shorter Hebrew text, but there is no equivalent for this verse.

4) Proverbial observances concerning servitude. "Favor and friendship give freedom (ἐλευθερώ ; the word does not occur in the Hebrew as the entire verse is omitted by the Masoretic text). Keep these for thyself that thou mayst not be exposed to reproach."⁶ "A wise slave love as thyself, And withhold not from him (his) freedom (ἐλευθερία for נָפְשׁוֹ)."⁷ "Free

1. Exodus 21:26, 27.

2. נָפְשׁוֹ is hapax legomenon in the Old Testament.

3. Leviticus 19:20

4. Deuteronomy 21:14.

5. Judith 16:23.

6. Proverbs 25:10a.

7. Sirach 7:21.

men (ἐλεύθερος, no equivalent word in the Hebrew text)
wait on a wise servant, And the intelligent man will not object."¹
"Put thy servant to work, and he will seek rest; Leave his hands
idle, and he will seek liberty!"² (ἐλευθερία translating
נַפְשׁוֹ).

5) Freedom of men used as an indication of rank. Jezebel
"sent the letters to the elders and the nobles (τοὺς ἐλευθέρους
translating נָתַן) who dwelt with Naboth in his city."³ "The
elders and the nobles (οἱ ἐλεύθεροι translating נָתַן)
who dwelt in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them . . ."⁴
Wine makes alike . . . the mind of the menial and the freeman . . ."⁵
(ἐλεύθερος). "Then I remonstrated with the nobles of
Judah."⁶ (οἱ τοῖς Ἰουδα τοῖς ἐλευθέρους
translating נָתַן). "O Reasoning minds, more kingly than kings,
than freemen more free, (ἐλευθέρων ἐλευθερώτεροι;
the book is extant only in the Greek) of the harmony of the seven
brethren, holy and well attuned to the keynote of piety!"⁷ "Happy

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1. Sirach 10:25. (I Kings 21:8 in Masoretic text).
 2. Sirach 33:25 (30:34).
 3. III Kings 20:8, (I Kings 21:8 in Masoretic text).
 4. III Kings 20:11, (I Kings 21:11).
 5. I Esdras 3:19.
 6. II Esdras 23:17, (Nehemiah 13:17).
 7. IV Maccabees 14:2, cf. John 8:36.

are you, O land, when your king is the son of free men . . . "1

(ἐλευθερος translating חֵן). "This was after King Jeconiah . . . and all the nobles (παντὸς ἐλευθέρου, חֵן) . . . left Jerusalem . . . "2

6) Miscellaneous usages. The slayer of Goliath was promised a tax remission, for King Saul had promised to "make his father's house free (ἐλευθερος, חֵן) in Israel."3 Mattathias writes of Jerusalem, "Instead of a free woman (ἐλευθερος, חֵן) she is become a slave."4 King Ptolemy Philopator commanded his officers in Egypt to accept information against the Jews, and to make sure that informers were promised rewards of riches and "honoured with freedom" (ἐλευθερία, no Hebrew equivalent because II Maccabees was written in Greek.)5 "I am a man who is free among the dead," or, "I am a man who is prostrate, weak, among the dead."6 ἐγενήθην ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἀπονήθης ἐν νεκροῖς ἐλεύθερος translating חֵן "Who has let the wild ass go free?"7 (ἐλευθερος translating חֵן).

1. Ecclesiastes 10:17.

2. Jeremiah 36:2, (29:2).

3. I Kings 17:25, (I Samuel 17:25 in Masoretic text).

4. I Maccabees 2:11, cf. Galatians 4:26.

5. III Maccabees 3:28.

6. Psalm 87:5, (Psalm 88:6).

7. Job 39:5.

²Ελευθερος and its cognates in the Septuagint refer then primarily to emancipation from slavery. The law offered freedom to slaves after six years of servitude.¹ In the seventh year the female slaves were released, and the male slaves were released and given a partial wage as well.² All slaves were released in the jubilee year (after seven groups of seven years), at the half century.³ But beyond this concrete use of the word, the Old Testament did not go.

b. Freedom from civil and political restrictions for groups.

1) Freedom for a geographical area. Simon "and his father's house . . . have chased away in fight the enemies of Israel from them, and established liberty for it."⁴ (Ελευθερία, Πύσις) Antiochus wrote the Jews, "Jerusalem and the sanctuary shall be free . . ."⁵ (Ελευθερος, Πύσις). Judas Maccabeus and his brothers "recovered the world-renowned temple, and freed the city . . ."⁶ (Ελευθερώω). Antiochus Epiphanes promised from his death bed "that he would proclaim the holy city free,"⁷ hoping that divine mercy would heal him from the stench and pain of his revolting disease. (Ελευθερος).

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1. Exodus 21:2.
 2. Deuteronomy 15:12-18.
 3. Leviticus 25:10.
 4. I Maccabees 14:26.
 5. I Maccabees 15:7.
 6. II Maccabees 2:22.
 7. II Maccabees 9:14.

2) Freedom for a group or nation. Darius "wrote for all the Jews that should go out of his realm up into Jewry, concerning their freedom, that no officer . . . should forcibly enter into their doors . . ."1 (ἐλευθερία, ἡ ψιγτι). Darius also wrote "that all they that should come from Babylonia to build the city should have their freedom, as well as their posterity . . ."2 (ἐλευθερία, ἡ ψιγτι). "And every soul of the Jews that hath been carried away captive from the land of Judah into any part of my kingdom, I [Demetrius] set at liberty without price."3 (ἐλεύθερος, ἡ ψιγτι). "Gather together our scattered people, set at liberty those who are in slavery among the heathen . . ."4 The Egyptian Jews were permitted to return toward their own nation, and they "departed unharmed, free, and full of joy."5 (ἐλεύθερος).

The Hebrew Scriptures, which Paul had thoroughly studied and sometimes used instead of the Septuagint version, has ἡ ψιγτι in five places where the word is not translated by ἐλεύθερος or its cognates.⁶ But in these instances, the Hebrew usage is

1. I Esdras 4:49.
2. I Esdras 4:53.
3. I Maccabees 10:33.
4. II Maccabees 1:27.
5. III Maccabees 7:20.

6. Hebrew words were located by reference to Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros, (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1953).

also undeveloped in the conceptual understanding of the idea.

"The small and the great are there, and the slave is free

(^{וְהַקָּטָן וְהַגָּדוֹל} ^{וְהַעֲבָדִים} ^{וְהַחֲפָזִים}) from his master."¹

"Is not this the fast that I choose . . . to let the oppressed

go free, (^{וְהַקָּטָן} ^{וְהַגָּדוֹל} ^{וְהַעֲבָדִים}) and to break every yoke?"²

"Every one would set free (^{וְהַקָּטָן} ^{וְהַגָּדוֹל} ^{וְהַעֲבָדִים}) his slave."³

"Took back the male and female slaves they had set free,"⁴

(^{וְהַקָּטָן} ^{וְהַגָּדוֹל} ^{וְהַעֲבָדִים}, Septuagint text omits "they had set free"). "I will

let the souls that you hunt go free like the birds."⁵ (^{וְהַקָּטָן} ^{וְהַגָּדוֹל} ^{וְהַעֲבָדִים})

by conjecture. The Greek reads, καὶ ἐξαποστελω τὰς ψυχὰς

... εἰς ἐκσκοπτισμόν, meaning, "and I will send away

the souls . . . into dispersion." And the sixth instance is a

possible use of ^{וְהַקָּטָן} ^{וְהַגָּדוֹל} ^{וְהַעֲבָדִים}. "Nevertheless Josiah . . . disguised

himself in order to fight with him."⁶ The Hebrew text reads,

^{וַיִּנְסֵהוּ} ^{וַיִּנְסֵהוּ} ^{וַיִּנְסֵהוּ} and might mean "tried to free himself". The

Septuagint renders it ἐκπαλαιώθη, from κραιπνίω,

to wax strong. In these six (or five) instances, the reference

is again primarily to manumission.

1. Job 3:19.

2. Isaiah 58:6.

3. Jeremiah 34:10 (41:10 LXX).

4. Jeremiah 34:11 (41:11 LXX).

5. Ezekiel 13:20.

6. II Chronicles 35:22 (II Paralipomenon 35:22).

So much for $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ and $\tau\eta\iota\gamma\tau\eta$. As has been shown above, $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ in the Septuagint has to do in the main with slave manumission, or collectively, with the emancipation of a nation. Paul makes wide use of $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ in his letters, following, in this respect, the Old Testament.¹ In only one case in the Septuagint does $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ take on a spiritual signification, and that is in the late apocryphal work of IV Maccabees (40 B. C. to A. D. 70), 14:2, where a song hails the martyred Maccabees as "than freemen more free" ($\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\omega\gamma\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\omega\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota$). The Apostle has a parallel thought, "we are more than conquerors" ($\epsilon\pi\tau\epsilon\rho\nu\iota\kappa\omega\mu\epsilon\nu$),² but there is no real connection between the encomium of the author of IV Maccabees and Paul's idea of freedom, for the former means by freedom nobility of soul while the latter by freedom means primarily deliverance from religion. /?

The greatest of Hebrew words for freedom is לִּירֵד , always translated in the Septuagint by $\alpha\phi\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$. The word occurs only seven times in the Old Testament, but it appears in two famous passages:

"And you shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty ($\alpha\phi\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$) throughout the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee ($\alpha\phi\epsilon\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma$) for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his family."³ X

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to bring good tidings to the afflicted;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty ($\alpha\phi\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$) to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound . . ."⁴ X

1. Rom. 6:20, 22, I Cor. 7:21, 22b, 9:19, 12:13, Gal. 2:4, 3:28, 4:22, 23, 30, 31, 5:1, 13, Eph. 6:8, Col. 3:11.

2. Romans 8:37.

3. Leviticus 25:10.

4. Isaiah 61:1.

The key verse is the first; in the second Isaiah elevates the identical idea to a spiritual plane. All the other Old Testament usages of לְחַיֵּיךְ are in places where Jeremiah and Ezekiel try to enforce the primary legislation of Leviticus.¹

Paul knew from passages like these that the God of his fathers was a God of freedom. But Paul does not make direct use of either of these references in his letters. Jesus quoted the Isaiah passage in Nazareth,² and then applied it to himself, declaring that "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."³ Paul also uses $\alpha\phi\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$,⁴ but always only to mean forgiveness, the meaning of the word in every other New Testament instance except for the quotation by Jesus. $\alpha\phi\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ in the Septuagint also had a wider use than merely to translate לְחַיֵּיךְ , although its Septuagint usage never meant forgiveness. Generally it was used for לְחַיֵּיךְ release, or as $\alpha\phi\epsilon\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma$, for לְחַיֵּיךְ , jubilee or holiday.

It has been suggested that Paul was able to rise above the literal signification of freedom by means of the Old Testament concept of the Servant (עַבְדְּךָ) of the Lord, the individual or the nation which most closely fulfilled God's purpose.⁵ For while the Christian has been emancipated from slavery to the law

1. Jeremiah 34:8, 15, 17 (twice), Ezekiel 46:17.

2. Luke 4:18, from Isaiah 61:1, see also 58:6.

3. Luke 4:21.

4. Acts 13:38, 26:18, Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14.

5. Grimm, op. cit., p. 57.

(and other things), he has become a slave (δοῦλος) of Christ. But this derivation is unlikely because ⁷²⁹ is translated by the Septuagint as ^{παις} ^{θεοῦ} and not as the ^{δοῦλος} which Paul uses.

3. The Spirit of Independence Implicit in the Hebraic Scriptures

Paul did not get his idea of freedom from any word which appears in the Hebrew Scriptures or in the Septuagint. But an idea can be potential in a continuum of thought without a word to express it. The Hebrews, for example, never evolved a doctrine of political freedom which could be expressed in conceptual terms as did the Greeks, but nonetheless an explicit doctrine of political freedom was latent in the milieu created by prophetic religion. As Lord Acton said:

"The government of the Israelites was a Federation, held together by no political authority, but by the unity of race and faith, and founded, not on physical force, but on a voluntary covenant. The principle of self-government was carried out not only in each tribe, but in every group of at least 120 families; and there was neither privilege of rank nor inequality before the law. Monarchy was so alien to the primitive spirit of the community that it was resisted by Samuel in that momentous protestation and warning which all the kingdoms of Asia and many of the kingdoms of Europe have unceasingly confirmed. The throne was erected on a compact; and the king was deprived of the right of legislation among a people that recognized no lawgiver but God, whose highest aim in politics was to restore the original purity of the constitution, and to make its government conform to the ideal type that was hallowed by the sanctions of heaven. The inspired men who rose in unflinching succession to prophesy against the usurper and the tyrant, constantly proclaimed that the laws, which were divine, were paramount over sinful rulers, and appealed from the established authorities, from the king, the priests, and the princes of the people, to the healing forces that slept in the uncorrupted consciences of the masses. Thus the example of the Hebrew nation laid down the parallel lines on which all freedom has been won—the doctrine of national tradition and the

doctrine of the higher law; the principle that a constitution grows from a root, by process of development, and not of essential change; and the principle that all political authorities must be tested and reformed according to a code which was not made by man."¹

Similarly, Paul's conception of spiritual freedom is too theocentric to have been based merely upon a word borrowed from the Stoics.

"The religion of Paul is too big a building to have been erected upon a pin-point."² The major formative influence upon Paul's conception of freedom was the Hebraic faith in a God who frees. He was dependent upon the Old Testament in a large measure for his spirit of independence, for his conviction that all men are to have free access to God, for his revolutionary idea that the law enslaved men, and for his confidence in a God who grants freedom.

a. There is throughout the Old Testament a strong stream of protest from the prophets who denounce those who falsely think that they have fulfilled all that God requires by punctilious observance of the small points of the law.

Amos was the first of the prophets to reverse the popular conception of the Day of the Lord as a day of Israel's vindication by victory in battle. He startled his contemporaries by declaring that the Day of the Lord meant destruction for them:

"Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!
Why would you have the day of the Lord?
It is darkness, and not light;
as if a man fled from a lion,
and a bear met him;

1. John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, The History of Freedom and Other Essays, (London, Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1919), pp. 4, 5.

2. Machen, op. cit., p. 21.

or went into a house and leaned his hand against the wall,
and a serpent bit him.
Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light,
and gloom with no brightness in it?"¹

Zephaniah echoed Amos' cry in the awesome dies irae, dies illa passage: "A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom . . ."2

Other prophets decried a vain faith in the observance of mere ritual. Samuel asked, "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."³

Hosea too opposed ceremonial law when it replaced the spirit of true religion:

"For I desire steadfast love
and not sacrifice
the knowledge of God,
rather than burnt offerings."⁴

Micah, Hosea's contemporary in the south, iterates this protest:

"Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my first-born for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
He has showed you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?"⁵

Jeremiah stood in the gate of the temple and warned the people:
"Do not trust in these deceptive words: 'This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.'"⁶

1. Amos 5:18-20.

2. Zephaniah 1:15.

3. I Sam. 15:22, Ps. 40:6.4. Hosea 6:6.

5. Micah 6:7, 8.

6. Jeremiah 7:4.

All these prophets angered their countrymen by denouncing vain allegiance to the temple cultus and the law. These words from the Hebrew prophets may have smarted the conscience of Saul, the persecutor of the young Church, when he assented to the stoning of Stephen for preaching against the temple and its cultus.

The prophetic interpretation of the law was not chained to any preconceived notion of its permanence. The prophets were not devotees of that consistency which makes little minds even smaller. Hosea declares that the Lord will punish the house of Jehu for the blood it spilled,¹ even though Jehu spilled the blood at the command of the Lord.² Jeremiah says that the burning of sons and daughters in the sacrificial fire is something which God does not command nor even think,³ even though God had said to Abraham, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering . . ."⁴ In Isaiah it is reported that the Lord suggested that Ahaz ask for a sign,⁵ when signs were forbidden according to the law.⁶ Paul, like the prophets, became willing to sacrifice consistency on the altar of truth, and to do away with law for the sake of spirit.

1. Hosea 1:4.

2. II Kings 9:6-10, 10:16, 17.

3. Jeremiah 7:31.

4. Genesis 22:2.

5. Isaiah 7:10, 11.

6. Deuteronomy 6:16. Deuteronomy may have been compiled years after Isaiah had been written, perhaps even composed after Isaiah. Even if the latter possibility were so, however, the contradiction would remain.

b. The impartiality of God toward all men and the equality of all men under God and the election of all men by God are teachings which are strongly represented in the Old Testament. The impartiality of God is taught in all three sections of the Hebrew Scriptures: in the law,^{1,2} in the writings,^{2,3} and in the prophets.⁴ Jeremiah denounced the nobility who released the slaves who had served them six years or more only in order to gain the favor of God when they were in danger from Nebuchadnezzar's armies, and then seized them back again when the danger had passed. This was fraud added to oppression, and Jeremiah defends the slave by calling him brother and neighbor.⁵ Ezekiel declared all men equal by using the generic term "son of man" of himself.⁶ He makes it very plain⁷ that all men must bear the responsibility for their own lives before God on the basis of how they behaved.

That the Gentiles are to come to know God as the Jews know God is a teaching well attested by the Bible of Paul. For example: The law said,

1. Deuteronomy 10:17.

2. Quoted by Paul in Romans 2:11.

3. II Chronicles 19:7.

4. Amos, for instance, wilily begins his declaration of wrath upon the surrounding nations--Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, etc.--only to conclude with summative wrath upon Israel in 2:4 to 9:15.

5. Jeremiah 34:17.

6. Finkelstein, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 332.

7. Ezekiel 18.

"I will stir them to jealousy with those who are no people;
I will provoke them with a foolish nation."¹

and,

"Rejoice, nations with his people."²

The Psalmist said,

"For this I will extol thee, O Lord, among the nations,
and sing praises to thy name."³

and,

"Praise the Lord, all nations;
Extol him, all peoples!"⁴

Hosea said,

"In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not people';
it shall be said to them, 'Sons of the living God.'"⁵

and,

"I will say to Not my people, 'You are my people';
and he shall say, 'Thou art my God.'"⁶

Two of the most remarkable passages are in Amos and in Isaiah.

Amos declared that it was the Lord who delivered the Philistines
from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir just as he did the Israelites

1. Deuteronomy 32:21, quoted by Paul, Romans 10:19.
2. Deuteronomy 32:43 LXX, quoted by Paul, Romans 15:10.
3. Psalm 18:49, II Samuel 22:50, quoted by Paul, Romans 15:9.
4. Psalm 117:1, quoted by Paul, Romans 15:11.
5. Hosea 1:10, quoted by Paul, Romans 15:11.
6. Hosea 2:23, quoted by Paul, Romans 9:25. Hosea may have been referring to Israelites who had been unfaithful to God as "not my people", but Paul interpreted him to mean the Gentiles.

from Egypt.¹ And Isaiah said that Egypt and Assyria are to be co-heirs with Israel, and are to be regarded as "my people" and "the work of my hands."²

Isaiah also said,

"In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples; him shall the nations seek, and his dwellings shall be glorious."³

Deutero-Isaiah said,

"To me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear."⁴

And,

"For that which has not been told them they shall see,
and that which they have not heard they shall understand."⁵

And he called all men to worship the Holy One of Israel.⁶

Trito-Isaiah said,

"I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me;
I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me.
I said, 'Here am I, here am I,'
to a nation that did not call on my name.
I spread out my hands all the day
to a rebellious people."⁷

1. Amos 9:7.

2. Isaiah 19:19-25.

3. Isaiah 11:10, quoted by Paul, Romans 15:12.

4. Isaiah 45:23, quoted by Paul, Romans 14:11, Philippians 2:10, 11.

5. Isaiah 52:15, quoted by Paul, Romans 15:21.

6. Isaiah 55:1-5, compare and contrast Deuteronomy 4:32-40.

7. Isaiah 65:1, 2, quoted by Paul, Romans 10:20, 21.

And,

"For I know their words and their thoughts, and I am coming to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory, and I will set a sign among them . . . and they shall see my glory among the nations . . . and some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites', says the Lord."¹

Jeremiah said,

"Thus says the Lord concerning all my evil neighbors who touch the heritage which I have given my people Israel to inherit: 'Behold, I will pluck them up from their land, and I will pluck up the house of Judah from among them. And after I have plucked them up, I will again have compassion on them, and I will bring them again each to his heritage and each to his land.'"²

Joel said,

"And it shall come to pass afterward,
that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.
Even upon the menservants and maidservants
in those days, I will pour out my spirit."³

And Zechariah said,

"And the Lord will become king over all the earth;
on that day the Lord will be one and his name one."⁴

These prophecies were known and believed by Pharisaic students of the Scriptures. But they mistakenly assumed that they would be accomplished within the legal system. For Paul it came as a new revelation that the righteousness of God was manifested apart from the law, "although the law and the prophets bear witness to it."⁵ That the Gentiles were to become fellow

1. Isaiah 66:18-21.

2. Jeremiah 12:14, 15.

3. Joel 2:28, 29.

4. Zechariah 14:9.

5. Romans 3:21.

heirs with the Jews was a "mystery . . . which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."¹

By these words, Paul explicitly states his debt to the Scriptures for his belief that God's highway may be traveled equally by all peoples. As he says before King Agrippa,

"To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: that the Christ must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles."²

It was on the basis of Scripture that Paul justified his special mission to the Gentiles, quoting from Deutero-Isaiah,

"I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."³

And on the basis of a quotation from Habakkuk, Paul warns his Jewish hearers that it may be of them that the Lord speaks when he says, "For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told."⁴ And that work is that "every one that believes is freed (ελευθερω) from everything from which you could not be freed (ελευθερω) by the law of Moses."⁵

1. Ephesians 3:5.
2. Acts 26:22, 23, paraphrasing Isaiah 49:6. Cf. Acts 24:14.
3. Acts 13:27 from Isaiah 49:6. See Acts 26:23, where Paul applies this same verse to Christ.
4. Acts 13:41, from Habakkuk 1:5.
5. Acts 13:39 (Acts 13:38, 39, in the Greek text).

c. Paul's overwhelming impression of the righteousness of God convinced him that it was impossible for a man to be justified through obedience to the law. The righteousness and holiness of God is emphasized in the Old Testament, and it is epitomized by Isaiah:

"Man is bowed down, and men are brought low,
and the eyes of the haughty are humbled.

But the Lord of hosts is exalted in justice,

and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness."¹

Paul's rigorous interpretation of the righteousness of God, and his persuasion that it results in the condemnation of man, is not characteristic of the rabbinic commentators. Only the author of IV Esdras agonizes over why God permits men to sin and then condemns them to perdition for it, and he stands alone among Jewish writers in his pessimism. It became possible for Paul, as a Christian, to take the Old Testament passages which taught that man was appallingly sinful at face value and yet not dissolve into the gloom of pessimism. The rabbis were never so audacious as to admit to a similar conclusion because for them there existed no alternative avenue toward God except through the very law which barred the way for anyone with a real conception of the seriousness of sin. They knew as well as the Christians that God was merciful, and consequently were forced to a more superficial attitude toward sin just because God, in his mercy,

1. Isaiah 5:15, 16.

had to overlook some sin or the whole world would be damned. There was no recourse for them except to trust in God's "winking" at sin, because there was no Christ, and the never-ending repetition of the temple sacrifices proffered no permanent answer. As has been shown, Hillel taught that God would incline the scale of justice in the favor of any man whose righteous deeds balanced evenly with his evil deeds. This confidence in God's willingness to overlook evil for good is also expressed by a canonical writer, Ezekiel, who says that God will forget the transgressions of a sinner "for the righteousness which he has done."¹ But his bold confidence in salvation by works is not representative of the best Old Testament theology.

But for Paul, the judgements he had learned from the Scripture about the sins of man became freighted with deadly meaning, judgements such as:

"We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment."²
Lord, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant;
for no man living is righteous before thee."³

In one place in the letter to the Romans Paul compiles a list of seven quotations from the Scriptures which confirm man's sinfulness, in order to drive home his point that those who "are under the power

1. Ezekiel 18:22.
2. Isaiah 64:6.
3. Psalm 143:2, echoed in Galatians 2:15, 16.

of sin are Jews themselves, "who are under the law."¹ By the law Paul seeks to prove that the law must have an end, for it damns its adherents instead of saving them.

The righteousness of God, coupled with God's holy condemnation of sin by the revelation of his will in the law, both of which are basic tenets of the Hebraic Scriptures, were essential preliminary convictions for Paul whose assessment of God's impeccability and justice was so high and whose engagement with the law so fierce, that there was no hope of attaining the former by the latter. The Old Testament view of God and man created the prison-house by which freedom's value is measured.

d. Yet God, to every Jew, is the God who desires his people to be free. The escape from the bondage of Egypt is for the Jew the central act of God in history. It is the proof that Israel is God's chosen nation. Its leader Moses is accounted the greatest of the prophets. It was celebrated by the literal emancipation of Hebrew slaves as symbolic of the greater emancipation of the nation from Egypt--and any who neglected to liberate their slaves were subject to excoriation by the prophets.² It was called to remembrance annually during the Passover festival, and from the time of Gamaliel II (A. D. 80-120) to this day the youngest boy at the Passover meal must ask his father, "Wherefore is this night different from all other nights?" And the father answers, "We were slaves to the Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Lord our God

1. Romans 3:9-19, quoting, in order, Psalm 14:1, 2, 53:1, 2, 5:9, 140:3, 10:7, Isaiah 59:7, 8, Psalm 36:1.

2. Jeremiah 34:8-17.

brought us forth from thence with a strong hand and outstretched arm. If the most holy, blessed by He, had not brought our fathers from Egypt then we, our children and our children's children would have been slaves to the Pharaohs in Egypt"¹

The exodus is the point from which modern Jews count their years.

It is to Jewish theology what the resurrection is to Christian theology, with this distinction between the exodus and the law, "Paul really believed in salvation by an act of God wrought in the person of Jesus, while Judaism believed in salvation through the observance of the Torah; deliverance by an act of God was not the foundation of Judaism, but only a devotional accessory."²

It is known beyond doubt that Paul owed part of his conception of freedom to this teaching from the Hebrew Scriptures, because he makes use of the exodus as a past event in history to embody the Christian idea of baptism, the significance of which is freedom from enslavement to sin. First, Paul equates the Israelite exodus with Christian baptism: "I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea"³ Then he says that baptism means that the believer has died a symbolic death with Christ.⁴ And because the Christian has therefore vicariously passed through

1. Mishnah Pesahim 5:5 and 10 following Exodus 13:8, as cited by Davies, op. cit., pp. 102, 103.

2. Knox, (Church of the Gentiles), op. cit., p. 98.

3. I Corinthians 10:1, 2.

4. Romans 6:3, 4.

death, he is therefore no longer "enslaved to sin", because "he who has died is freed (Свободен) from sin."¹ In Paul's mind, therefore, the God of the exodus is the God of baptism, and the purpose of God in the exodus of the Israelites is the same as his purpose in the baptism of the Christian—freedom, in the one case from the bondage of Egypt, in the other case from the enslavement to sin. It has been proposed that early Christian baptism was a sacramental recapitulation of the exodus, and that the people "no doubt descended into the water of the Jordan or any other convenient stream and then ascended again on the other side, just as the children of Israel marched through the Red Sea by the order of Moses."² The Jordan in its lower reaches has banks so steep and water so deep that this maneuver is rather unlikely, although the suggestion is provocative, and does illustrate a real connection between the exodus and baptism. Philo also used the exodus through the Red Sea as an allegory of escape, but his was an escape from the material and the evil to the good and the spiritual.³

The Hebrews knew little about freedom eo nomine, but they knew from the prophets that God infused men with an irrepressible spirit of independence and scorn of consequence, from

1. Romans 6:6, 7.

2. Harald Sahlin, "The New Exodus of Salvation according to St. Paul", in Anton Fridrichsen, The Root of the Vine, (Westminster, Dacre Press, 1953), p. 89.

3. De Sacr. Ab. et Cain, 17.

prophecy that non-Jews would become brother with the Jew in the service of God, from the law that it was sin which enslaved man, sin for which God willed destruction, and from the history of the nation that their God was one who led men out of bondage. The Hebrews had an idea of the content of freedom if they did not have the expression for it, and without that content Paul would never have borrowed a word which the Greeks had singled out and developed as form, but form, which from the Hebraic point of view, was of inferior content. The rabbinic and Old Testament background for Paul's idea of freedom is more important in his application of the word than the meaning of the word in the context from which he took it. Heinrich Schlier has overemphasized the contribution of the occident to the Pauline conception of Christian freedom in his study, "Über das Vollkommene Gesetz der Freiheit," where he maintains that "freedom is a western idea",¹ and in his article on ἐλευθερος in the Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, in which he gives an extensive review of the Greek idea of freedom and devotes not a paragraph to its Old Testament significance. This is a serious omission, for in every instance where Paul uses ἐλευθερος he uses it in consonance with the idea of freedom implicit within the Old Testament. Paul's Hebraic heritage is the enveloping element within which his concept of freedom develops, and it is the matrix of emancipation.

1. Heinrich Schlier, "Über das Vollkommene Gesetz der Freiheit", in Festschrift Rudolf Bultmann zum 65. Geburtstag überreicht, (Stuttgart und Köln, W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1949), p. 190.

II. Paul's Hellenistic Environment: "Freedom's Ferment"

A. Paul Discovered Freedom outside of Judaism

The first question that must be asked is this: does Paul's Jewish background fully explain his interest in freedom? For Paul the God of the Jews was the God who was unknowable. As a young man, Paul had studied in Jerusalem to be a rabbi under the most eminent teacher of his day. There he learned of the promises of God which were contained in the ancient writings of his people, and of the moralistic interpretation of them which at first seemed to make them attainable but which experience proved only served to make them impossible to be achieved. God was one who wanted his creatures to find fellowship with him, but one who seemed to be willing to abandon them to their own ineffectual struggles. Paul's efforts to justify himself were failures. And his tremendous labor for religion was not merely ineffectual, but involved him in condemnation. It was impossible for him to sing as did the Psalmist:

"I will keep thy law continually,
for ever and ever;
and I shall walk at liberty (ἐν πλῆτυσμῷ, תְּיָתִירָא)
for I have sought thy precepts."¹

Paul was damned by the means he had been taught would save him.

"Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"² Paul never found the answer in Judaism.

In the entire Septuagint (which includes both the Old Testament and the Apocrypha), freedom in its verbal, substantival and

1. Psalm 119:44, 45.

2. Romans 7:24.

adjectival forms appears thirty-eight times. Yet in Paul's ten brief letters freedom in its three forms occurs twenty-eight times. Page for page, freedom occurs about eighteen times more frequently in Paul's letters than in the Septuagint. And it occurs about eight times more frequently in Paul's letters than in the rest of the New Testament (where it occurs thirteen times). This disparity is dramatic, and it strongly hints of some new factor to be taken into account to explain the sudden increase of the word's occurrence.

Freedom as a theological concept was unknown in the Old Testament. For first century Jewish Christians it was a non-biblical idea. It may at first have seemed out of place, novel, even syncretistic, to express God's purpose for man with this Goy word. It is difficult even to express freedom per se in Hebrew; it always carries with it the idea of manumission. For freedom in its abstract, ideal purity, the Hebrews had no word. The translators of the Septuagint used *ἐλευθερία* for *תְּפִלָּה*, etc., and by it meant no more than *תְּפִלָּה* etc.; but Paul made use of the concept in a way which was foreign to the Hebraic pattern of thought. Paul uses this word without apology, explanation, or hesitancy. It must have had its development outside the Judaic tradition; it must already have been freighted with fresh meaning, so that Paul could readily appropriate it and be understood by it. The mere contrast of the Septuagint usage and the Pauline usage of eleutheria leads one to suspect that there must be an additional factor which contributes to the signification of

the word as it is used in the Apostle's letters. It is exactly as

Schmitz says:

"In the Old Testament the concrete religious datum of law and promise so completely ruled the spiritual life of Israel, that the question of freedom in its conceptual, empirical sense could not arise at all. What was found in late Judaism, especially in its Hellenistic sections concerning this question may be generally derived from Greek, and especially Stoic influence, and consequently does not fit in with the religious style of the essential Jewish development. It would therefore be highly possible that Paul would come into contact with the Stoic teaching on freedom, since he as a Jew of the diaspora more or less breathed in the Hellenistic air, and would have an explanation for it."¹

B. Paul's Early Environment was Hellenistic

Paul was subjected to a strong influence extraneous to his Hebraic heritage. He was born into a Hellenistic environment which was "freedom's ferment". He was born and brought up in Tarsus,² a city of half a million inhabitants³ (which would make it of the same population as modern Edinburgh or Cincinnati), and the residence of the Roman governor of the province. It had had a long and distinguished history. It was governed at one time by Cicero,⁴ visited by Julius Caesar,⁵ and it was the place where the victorious Antony received Cleopatra just forty years before Paul's birth.⁶

1. Otto Schmitz, Der Freiheitsgedanke bei Epiktet und Das Freiheitszeugnis des Paulus, (Gütersloh, Bertelsmann, 1923), pp. 56, 57.

2. Acts 21:39, 22:3, 23:34.

3. William Mitchell Ramsay, The Cities of Saint Paul, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1907), p. 97. The section on Tarsus is found on pp. 83-244.

4. Ibid., p. 192.

5. Ibid., p. 196.

6. H. V. Morton, In the Footsteps of Saint Paul, p. 61.

It became the major city of the Cilician plain because a large stream made it a port, though ten miles inland, and, at the same time, it was on the main route to the only pass through the Taurus Mountains, thirty miles distant. The Tarsians were the ones who carved from the rock wall a road running uphill all the way through the ten mile gorge and series of defiles known as the Cilician Gates. Thus they increased their prosperity by their initiative and industry.

The city was renowned for its Greek-speaking "university" which approached in importance those of Alexandria and Athens. The best known of its teachers was Athenodorus, a man born near Tarsus, and the only Tarsian other than Paul about whom enough information exists to make him come alive as an individual person. Athenodorus studied with the Stoic Posidonius at Rhodes. He became the tutor of the youthful Augustus, the man who was Caesar when Christ was born. He spent most of his years in Rome, but retired to Tarsus in his old age. He did his best work in the realm of moral philosophy, for which he was commended by Cicero and cited by Seneca. It was Athenodorus whom Seneca quoted as saying, "Know that you are free from all passions only when you have reached the point that you ask God for nothing except what you can ask openly."¹ Athenodorus was the man who used Augustus' delegated power to overthrow the corrupt government of Tarsus and reinstate a constitutional democracy. This reforming Stoic philosopher died when Paul was about six, but it is

1. Seneca, Moral Epistles, 1, 10, 5, quoted in Ramsay, op. cit., p. 222.

likely that his fame and accomplishments were treasured by the city and the university. Five eminent Stoic philosophers were Tarsians,¹ besides outstanding men in other fields. From the neighboring seaport of Soli came Chrysippus the Stoic and Aratus the natural philosopher,² whom Paul did the favor of quoting in his speech to the Stoics and Epicureans in Athens.³ With good reason Paul could speak of his city with subdued pride, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city . . ."⁴

It was characteristic of Judaism everywhere to resist Hellenism with all its powers. One Pharisee wrote, "Cursed be he who feeds swine: and cursed be he who teaches his son Greek literature."⁵ The Jews resisted the forcible Hellenization of their country with armed revolt under the Maccabees, and they resisted the Romans in A. D. 66-70 and again in A. D. 135. But it was also rabbinic teaching to utilize all ideas which could glorify the Torah. The scribes and the Pharisees would "traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte,"⁶ and they would not hesitate to stoop to pagan literature if that could help them in their missionarying. One of the controversies between Hillel and Shammai was whether or not it was legitimate to study Greek literature. Hillel was in favor, and Gamaliel followed

1. David Smith, The Life and Letters of St. Paul, (Harper & Brothers), p. 18.

2. Ibid., p. 18.

3. Acts 17:28, from Aratus' Phaenomena 5.

4. Acts 21:39.

5. Smith, op. cit., p. 23.

6. Matthew 23:15.

his grandfather's teaching. Gamaliel's son "is reported to have said that of the thousand young men who had studied in the House of Interpretation at Jerusalem in his father's time, no fewer than one half had learned Greek wisdom."¹ If this is so, it is probably true that the young Tarsian was among them, for he had no narrow prejudice against the foreigners among whom he had lived, and there was for him of course no language barrier at all.

Paul's native fluency in Greek opened to him the civilized world. Greek was spoken from Elephantine, 500 miles up the Nile, to Spain, at the western extremity of the Mediterranean. Greek was spoken in Jerusalem, where there were Greek language synagogues for those who could not understand Aramaic; and it was spoken in Rome itself, where there were people who could understand Greek as readily as Latin, for Paul wrote his letter to Rome in Greek. The Hellenic language was the language of art and philosophy, the language of travel and commerce, the language of education and religion. Greek became the language of religion even for the Jews—at least for those who lived outside of Palestine. For almost three hundred years before Paul's birth the Jews who lived outside of Palestine used the Greek translation of their sacred scriptures--the translation which Josephus reports seventy-two scholars accomplished in seventy-two days from a Hebrew manuscript written in letters of gold. This Septuagint version was used almost exclusively by Paul, and it remained the Bible of the Church for a thousand years. By means of this common

1. Cited by Smith, op. cit., p. 28.

and universal language, barriers of geography and nationalism became weakened, and ideas could be more readily interchanged. While Paul's knowledge of Greek opened to him the civilized world, it also made it possible for the Hellenistic world to make its deep impression upon him.

Paul was also subjected to a strong Greek influence by his travels to the very centers of civilization of his day, a civilization so advanced that it is constitutive for modern civilization. It is a mistake to think that Paul was a missionary to the illiterate, the uncouth, the primitive. Paul was herald of the truth to the greatest cities of his world--to Antioch, Tarsus, Athens, Corinth, Rome. Perhaps the false impression of the people to whom he brought the Christian message has grown not only from the backwardness of these areas in the present century, but from his own angry polemic against their degradations in the first chapter of Romans. Paul, however, was there not describing the peasants and rustics, savages and barbarians whom moderns associate with missionaries. He was talking about the Romans and the Greeks, the finest products of the civilized world. He was talking about thinkers like Socrates who was also a homosexual, warriors like Alcibiades who was also a traitor, satirists like Petronius who was also a libertine. He was there talking about the race which built marble temples of delicate proportion and beauty in settings of scenic splendor. He was talking about the people who taught the world how to govern itself under law; who built a civilization strong enough to endure a millenium, who conceived philosophies which have not been surpassed, who chiseled

statues never since matched, who began the study of accurate history, who initiated scientific method, who inaugurated state education. These people, though corrupt and sinful, were the most advanced people. Paul chose to take the gospel to the most noble, the most educated, and the most cultured of his time. He aimed for the highest and sought out the best to hear his gospel. From the beginning of the third journey this was his conscious purpose: "I must also see Rome".¹ Not outward, but inward to the heart of the Empire; not Asia, but Macedonia--this was the plan according to the call of God.² And the chronicle of Paul's life does not end before the historian can write with laconic simplicity, "And so we came to Rome".³ The effectiveness of Paul's message depended in part upon his knowledge and understanding of the people to whom he spoke. He was quite capable of uttering platitudes about brotherhood and of contributing bits of popular philosophy to his discourse in order to secure rapport. He told the Corinthians openly that it was his intention to adapt himself to various mores as far as he could, if this would contribute to his effectiveness.⁴ By deliberate choice Paul became a Greek, a choice he made because of the character of the mission field to which he was called. By the place of his birth, by his knowledge of languages, by the encouragement of his teachers, and by the necessity of his mission, Paul was subjected to the influence of Greek ways of thought. It is well within the bounds of reasonable possibility that Paul's accent on freedom was derived from this environment.

1. Acts 19:21.

2. Acts 16:6-10.

3. Acts 28:14.

4. I Corinthians 10:19-23.

C. The Freedman of the Emperor

There is evidence which demonstrates clearly that Paul seized ideas from this Hellenistic environment and "baptized them into Christ."¹ The only place in the New Testament where ἀπελεύθερος appears is in a letter of Paul's.² This word is not found in the Septuagint or in any other of the Greek versions of the Old Testament or the Apocrypha. But there are many parallel usages of this word in inscriptions found in the pagan world of the Hellenistic age. For instance:

From Palestine in the time of Herod Agrippa I and II,³

"... Ἀφάρεὺς ἀπελεύθερος..."

From Ephesus,⁴

"... Σεκούνδου ἀπελεύθερος..."

From Ephesus,⁵

"... Σεβαστοῦ ἀπελεύθ[ε]ρος..."

From Philadelphia,⁶

"... Σεβαστο[ῦ] ἀπελεύθερος..."

From Syria near Damascus,⁷

"... Λυσανίου τετράρχου ἀπελεύθερος..."

From Jerash,⁸

"... Δημητρίου [ᾧ] ἀπελεύθερος..."

1. Galatians 3:27.

2. I Corinthians 7:22.

3. Wilhelmus Dittenberger, *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae*, (Leipzig, Apud. S. Hirzel, Vol. I 1903, Vol. II 1905), Vol. I, p. 631.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 90.

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 180.

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 183.

7. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 302, 303. 8. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 316.

From Palmyra,¹

"... Καίσαρος ἀπελεύθερος..."

From Egypt in the time of Caesar Augustus (A. D. 14-37),²

"... ἀπελεύθερος αὐτοῦ..."

From Thebes,³

"... πρὸς Βασιλείδην τὸν Καίσαρος ἀπελεύθερον..."

From Egypt,⁴

"... Σεβαστοῦ ἀπελευθέρου..."

From Tyre,⁵

"... Σεβασ[τοῦ] ἀπελ[εύθερος]..."

Deissmann suggests that Paul parallels the thought of "the freedman of the emperor" (Σεβαστοῦ ἀπελεύθερος), and "the freedman of Caesar" (ἀπελεύθερος Καίσαρος), when he uses the phrase "a freedman of the Lord" (ἀπελεύθερος κυρίου).⁶ This phrase would be immediately understood by the Christian slaves of Corinth when Paul's letter was read in the congregation. Paul supports their desires to become free, and hints that this is no less than the will of God. "Were you a

1. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 331.

2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 369.

3. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 379.

4. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 422.

5. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 444, 445.

6. Adolf Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, translated by Lionel R. M. Strachan, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1910), p. 382.

slave when called? Never mind. But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity. For he who was called in the Lord as a slave is a freedman of the Lord."¹ If a Christian slave is a freedman of the Lord, he is a freedman of the emperor a fortiori; and the parallelism in the phrase hints that this was what the Apostle meant.

A slave might obtain his freedom by saving all the money he could garner and privately buy himself from his master. By this means he could avoid the difficult process of formal manumission, and also save the five per cent tax.² By circumventing the law, though, he would fail to gain Roman citizenship, which he could have obtained through legal manumission. Sometimes, especially within the imperial household, slaves were manumitted by the free gift of the owner. "Testamentary manumission, which carried with it both liberty and the Roman citizenship, was an attractive form of charity. It postponed the gift till the donor could not feel the cost, and, by releasing his pent-up benefactions on his death, ensured the concentration at his funeral of the gratitude due to the liberality of a lifetime."³ This practice resulted in so many manumissions that Augustus Caesar was moved to limit the proportion of slaves any owner could free. This law, the Lex

1. I Corinthians 7:20-22.

2. The tax is mentioned by Epictetus, The Discourses as Reported by Arrian, the Manuel, and Fragments, translated by W. A. Oldfather, (London, The Loeb Classical Library, William Heinemann, 1928), II, 1, 26; IV, 1, 33.

3. The Cambridge Ancient History, edited by S. A. Cook, et al., (Cambridge, The University Press), Vol. X, p. 432.

Fufia Caninia, which was legislated in 2 B. C., allowed a man to bequeath freedom to a stated proportion of his slaves, and the larger the number of slaves he owned, the smaller the fraction he was allowed to free. This of course meant that only the most favored and capable of the slaves would be granted their liberty. Many of these freedmen proved their vigor by amassing fortunes, marrying well, and attaining positions of responsibility in the government. "The life of one of these imperial slave ministers was a strangely romantic career which has surely seldom been matched in the history of human fortunes. Exposed and sold in early youth in the slave markets of Smyrna, Delos, or Puteoli, after an interval of ignominious servitude, installed as groom of the chambers, thence promoted, according to his aptitudes, to be keeper of the jewels, or tutor of the imperial heir, still further advanced to be director of the post, or to a place in the financial service, the freedman might end by receiving the honour of knight-hood, the procuratorship of a province, or one of those great ministries which placed him in command of the Roman world."¹

Any former slave who could say that he had become an "imperial freedman", or "freedman of Caesar", was saying that he was one of a group of men who were distinguished because of their merit rather than because of their heredity. Paul was himself a Roman citizen,² and it has been conjectured that his father had had sufficient business acumen to amass enough wealth to buy it, or had received

1. Samuel Dill, Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius, (London, Macmillan and Co., 1911), pp. 112, 113. See also chapter III, "The Society of the Freedmen", pp. 100-137.

2. Acts 22:28.

it as a gift because of distinguished service. Another law, the Lex Junia, which is also believed to have been instituted by Augustus, confirmed for the children of freedmen the freedom of their father,¹ and so Paul himself had become a free man and a citizen. The Apostle's Roman name Paulus may indeed have been given him in honor of the Roman lord who conferred freedom upon his father.² It does not necessarily follow, however, that because Paul's father or other ancestor had acquired Roman citizenship that it had been acquired from a status of slavery. If a slave could rise to Roman citizenship by purchase, certainly a free Jew could acquire it by the same method. The expression "freedman of the emperor" was so common that Paul could easily have heard it here and there, but it is not impossible that his family had experienced emancipation in Tarsus. At any rate, and this is Paul's point in I Corinthians 7:22, it was a reason for any man—slave or citizen—to give thanks if the Lord had conferred on him the honor of freedom.

D. Sacral Manumission

A second example of how Paul was influenced by his Hellenistic environment is found in his use of the expression "for freedom"

(ἐπὶ ἐλευθερίᾳ).³ This is the formula which was used when slaves were manumitted by the deity.⁴ According to this rite,

1. Cambridge Ancient History, op. cit., Vol. X, p. 431.

2. Smith, op. cit., p. 21.

3. Galatians 5:13, also 5:1 according to variant reading. See pp. 9, 10.

4. Deissmann, op. cit., pp. 324-333.

the slave paid his master the price of his freedom through the temple priest, who, no doubt, removed a fee in the process. Thereby the slave was certified to be a freedman in the eyes of men and the gods. This practice was widespread--manumission documents have been found in a number of cities bordering the Aegean Sea.¹ Generally these documents include the phrase "for freedom". An inscription from the retaining wall of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi from the year 200 or 199 B. C., for instance, includes the phrase twice:

Date. ἔπριάτο δ' Ἀπόλλων

Date. Apollo the Pythian

δ' Πύθιος, παρὰ Σωσιβίου

x bought from Sosibius

Ἀμφισσέος ἐπ' ἐλευθερίᾳ

of Amphissa, for freedom,

σῶμ[α] γυναικεῖον, αἵ ὄνομα

a female slave, whose name

Νίκαια, τὸ γένος Ῥωμαίων,

is Nicaea, by race a Roman,

τιμῆς

with a price

ἀργυρίου μνᾶν τριῶν καὶ

of three minae of silver and

ἡμιμνᾶίου. προαπὸδοτός κατὰ

a half-mina. Former seller according

τὸν νόμον Εὐμνᾶστος

to the law: Eumnastus

Ἀμφισσεύς. τὰν τιμῶν

of Amphissa. The price

ἀπέχει. τὰν δὲ ὧν

he hath received. The purchase, however,

1. Ibid., p. 325.

ἘΠΙΣΤΕΥΣΕ ΝΙΚΑΙΑ ΤῶΙ

Nicaea hath committed unto

ἈΠΟΛΛΩΝΙ ἘΠ' ἑλευθερίᾳ.

Apollo, for freedom.¹

Names of witnesses, etc., follow.

The Roman slave girl Nicaea had been acquired by Eumnastus of Amphissa. Eumnastus sold her to a fellow townsman, Sosibius. While Sosibius' slave, Nicaea's savings increased until she had money enough to equal her value on the slave market—three and a half minae of silver (about 20 pounds or 56 dollars). She approached Sosibius and found that he was willing to let her go free as long as he was not required to sustain a financial loss. So together, with several witnesses, and perhaps with her former owner Eumnastus, they walked through the great olive groves of Amphissa and toiled for hours up the steep path to the magnificent marble temple city of Delphi, built at the base of a vaulting cliff on the southern side of the mountain and overlooking the deep valley, the town of Amphissa, the blue Corinthian gulf, and the distant hills of the Peloponnesus. They went to the Temple of Apollo and found one of the priests who was appointed to deal with manumissions. Nicaea paid her money to him, and he in turn paid Sosibius—but only after carefully ascertaining from Eumnastus that Sosibius was indeed her owner. The agreement was then chiseled into the wall built of massive polygonal stones which formed the base of the Temple to proclaim to all who cared to read that the manumission had taken place. The inscription is still there. Sosibius with his money and

1. Ibid., p. 327.

Eumnastus returned to Amphissa, and Nicaea after staying to give thanks to Apollo her benefactor, returned to the town below at a time of her own choosing, now for the first time in her life a free woman.

This is the image which Paul makes reference to when he wrote to the Galatians. They had become like Nicaea slaves of the god, and so were emancipated from their previous bondage. And the price of their freedom was purchased for them by the god himself.

"A Christian slave of Corinth going up the path to the Acrocorinthus about Eastertide, when St. Paul's letter arrived, would see towards the north-west the snowy peak of Parnassus rising clearer and clearer before him, and every one knew that within the circuit of that commanding summit [at Delphi] lay the shrines at which Apollo or Serapis or Asclepius the Healer bought slaves with a price, for freedom. Then in the evening assembly was read the letter lately received from Ephesus, and straightway the new Healer was present in spirit with His worshippers, giving them freedom from another slavery, redeeming with a price the bondmen of sin and the law—and that price no pious fiction, first received by Him out of the hard-earned denarii of the slave, but paid by Himself with the redemption-money of His daily new self-sacrifice, rousing up for freedom those who languished in slavery."¹

In these two phrases, "freedman of the Lord" and "for freedom", Paul utilizes terms taken from both state and sacral manumission procedures. Paul uses illustrative material taken directly from the daily experience of the people to explain to them in their own idiom just what it was that Christ had done for them.

E. The Meaning of Freedom in Hellenic History and Literature

Both of these examples are illustrative material gathered to explain a truth. They are only phrases picked up by the Apostle to drive home a principle. It is a much more important question to ask

1. Ibid., p. 333.

if Paul derived the principle itself from the Hellenistic milieu in which he lived. This is a possibility which cannot be overlooked. If this be the fact of the matter, Paul did not derive his idea from the slave markets and from the legal procedures of the Roman Empire; he got it indirectly from the great minds of Greek philosophy--from Plato and Aristotle, from Zeno and Cleanthes and the others. It is in the writings of Hellenic history, drama, and philosophy that the key to the origin of the Pauline conception of freedom may be discovered.

The Greek idea of freedom was born in the Hellenic age. The adjective for freedom is found in Greek literature beginning with Homer (c. 850 B. C.), the noun beginning with Pindar (521-441 B. C.) and Herodotus (484-408 B. C.), and the verb beginning with Aeschylus (525-456 B. C.).¹ It appears that the rationale for the heroic defense of their country against the mighty Persian oppressor sparked the Hellenic mind to modify the adjective into a substantival and a verbal form. So "freedom" and "to free" were created out of the necessity of the Hellenes to express what they were fighting for. In the Hellenic period Greece was only dimly within the geographical knowledge of the Hebrews. They called it Javan (that is, Ionia),² and once refer to "the Greeks".³ It was a country at the ends of the earth.⁴ It was only after Alexander the Great brought the

1. Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, (New York, American Book Company, 1889), p. 204.

2. Genesis 10:4, Isaiah 66:19, Ezekiel 27:13.

3. Joel 3:6.

4. Isaiah 66:19, Joel 3:6.

civilization of the Greeks to the doorstep of Judea on his way to the conquest of the Persians that the two cultures met. From the time of Alexander (died 333 B. C.) through the time of the birth of Christianity, the world was in what is called the Hellenistic age.

In the pre-Hellenic era of Greek history, freedom was little more than a contrast to the misery of servitude. Homer (850 B. C. or earlier) has the word in only two phrases, "the day of freedom" and "the cup drunk to freedom".¹ The tension which then existed was not only between the slave and the freeman but also between the low and the highborn. Athens struggled long for political freedom, and finally, under Solon (638?-599? B. C.), attained it. But it was the triumph of the free Greeks over the slave armies of the East in the Persian wars (490-479 B. C.) which brought the concept of freedom in its fullest meaning to the attention of all. In the eyes of the Greeks themselves, it was the union of the love of freedom and the love of country which distinguished them from all others. Freedom was the central idea of Greek government. "What do you say [government's] criterion to be?" 'Liberty', I replied; 'for you may hear it said that this is best managed in a democratic city, and for this reason that is the only city in which a man of free spirit will care to live.'² But by freedom the Greeks did not mean freedom

1. References to Greek classical works following are taken mostly from the three works noted here and quoted from the Loeb Classical Library. Rudolf Hirzel, *Themis, Dike und Verwandtes, Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Rechtsidee bei den Griechen*, (Leipzig, Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1907), pp. 253-263. Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, "ἐλευθερία", "ἐλεύθερος" and "ἐλευθερόω", in *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Vol. I (1940), p. 532. Heinrich Schlier, ἐλεύθερος, ἐλευθερόω, ἐλευθερία, ἀπελευθερος, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, edited by Gerhard Kittel, (1935), pp. 484-500.

2. Plato, *Republic*, VIII, 562b.

to do as one pleased but freedom to govern oneself. *ἐλευθερον*

τὸ ἀρχον αὐτοῦ 1 As Lord Acton expressed it:

"But Plato and Aristotle were philosophers, studious not of unguided freedom, but of intelligent government. They saw the disastrous effects of ill-directed striving for liberty; and they resolved that it was better not to strive for it, but to be content with a strong administration, prudently adapted to make men prosperous and happy."²

In Aristotle's own words:

"Now a fundamental principle of the democratic form of constitution is liberty—that is what is usually asserted, implying that only under this constitution do men participate in liberty, for they assert this as the aim of every democracy. But one factor of . . . liberty is to govern and be governed in turn . . . And one is for a man to live as he likes; for they say that this is the function of liberty, inasmuch as to live not as one likes is the life of a man that is a slave. This is the second principle of democracy, and from it has come the claim not to be governed, preferably not by anybody, or failing that, to govern or be governed in turns . . ."³

Inasmuch as men cannot live together in harmony and all do as they please at the same time, he taught that men must voluntarily unite themselves into a government. Aristotle defined a free state as a voluntary association, ". . . a city is a partnership of free men."⁴ Consequently, for the Greeks, "freedom is . . . neither freedom from law or against law, but under law."⁵ This conception of freedom is illustrated by Pindar's word, "Hieron founded that city with the aid of god-built freedom, according to the laws of the rule of Hyllus."⁶

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1. Pseudo-Plato, Defin. 415 A.
 2. Acton, op. cit., p. 22.
 3. Aristotle, Politics, VI. 1. 1317 a 40—1317 b 16.
 4. Ibid., III, IV. 1279 a 22, cf. I, II. 1255 b 20.
 5. Schlier, op. cit., (TWB), p. 485.
 6. Pindar, Pythian Odes, I, lines 62, 63.

Plato wrote, "We ought to . . . show how complete liberty, unfettered by any authority, is vastly inferior to a moderate form of government under elected magistrates."¹ And the historian Herodotus quotes Demaratus as telling Xerxes, the Persian tyrant, of the Spartans: "Free they are, yet not wholly free; for law is their master, whom they fear much more than your men fear you."²

With the success of the political struggle for freedom in Athens, the value of personal independence was increased. If the concept of freedom could hardly be traced in Homeric times, now in Athens it is so far developed that it moves beyond the political realm and is regarded as a virtue in itself. Socrates begins an argument to demonstrate that self-control is the way to virtue by asking, "'Tell me, Euthydemus,' he said, 'do you think that freedom is a noble and splendid possession both for an individual and a community?'"³ 'Yes, I think it is, in the highest degree.'⁴ The greatest reward possible for men is that of the freedom of the "pure abode", as Plato makes Socrates say: "But those who are found to have excelled in holy living are freed from these regions within the earth and are released as from prisons; they mount upward into the pure abode and dwell upon the earth."⁵ But it is God alone who is free, for he only is without any responsibility: "Each office has its burthen except to be lord of heaven; for none is free save only Zeus".⁶

1. Plato, Laws, 698a.

2. Herodotus VII, 104.

3. "Community" is properly in the dative singular, not the plural. Contra E. C. Marchant's translation in the Loeb.

4. Xenophon, Memorabilia, IV. V. 2.

5. Plato, Phaedo, 114b.

6. Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound, 50.

Freedom is the central conceptual contribution of the Greeks to world thought. It was defended with their gold and blood against the Persians, it was defined and regulated by their philosophers, and it was disseminated by the peripatetic Stoics as man's highest good. Freedom is the unifying thread which runs through Greek history and thought. So respected was the idea that it came to be regarded that a man's nobility was measured by his freedom. Nobility was expressed by the same word as freedom, just as in German, Freiherr, Freiin; baron, baroness. For instance, R. G. Bury translates ἑλευθεροὶ ἑλευθέρως, as "... they being gentlemen and his a gentleman's service."¹ Bury adds a note explaining this rendition: "Literally 'free men', —the Greek word connoting generosity, culture and dignity, like our 'gentle'."² Another example, also from Plato: τὸ γὰρ τῆς πόλεως γενναῖον καὶ ἑλευθερόν, "... the noble and liberal character of our city ..."³ So the free man is a gentleman or a nobleman. Several examples of this use of the word have already been adduced from the Septuagint.⁴

The Greeks related other ideas besides nobility to freedom: equality, ἰσηγορία; freedom of speech, παρρησία; safety, σωτηρία; and autonomy, αὐτονομία. For instance, Polybius writes: "That war is a terrible thing I agree, but it is not so terrible that we should submit to anything in order to avoid it. For why do we all vaunt our civic equality

1. Plato, Laws, 919e.

2. R. B. Bury, Plato's Laws, (London, Loeb Classical Library, William Heinemann, 1926), Vol. II, p. 410.

3. Plato, Menexenus, 245c. 4. Pp. 74, 75.

(ἰσχυρία) and liberty of speech (παρρησία) and all that we mean by the word freedom (ἐλευθερία), if nothing is more advantageous than peace?"¹ This extension of the use of the word and the contexts in which it is used, demonstrates the great esteem the Greeks had for "freedom's radiant light", to use Aeschylus' metaphor.²

Freedom for the Greeks was well worth fighting for. This attitude was not well appreciated by the enemies of Greece, and the power of the Greek love for freedom was underestimated by the Persians. Xerxes wonders what it is that can inspire the Greeks to battle his powerful invading hosts: ". . . how should a thousand, or ten thousand, or even fifty thousand, if they be all alike free and not under the rule of one man, withstand so great a host as mine?"³ Two Spartans of noble birth and of wealth later had the opportunity to explain to their Persian captor the reason for the valiant Greek defense: ". . . you know well how to be a slave, but you have never tasted of freedom, to know whether it be sweet or not. Were you to taste of it, not with spears you would counsel us to fight for it, no, but with axes."⁴ It was with a cry for freedom that the Hellenic navy joined with the superior forces of the Persians in the decisive battle of Salamis:

1. Polybius, History, IV, 32, 3-5. For safety with freedom, see Xenophon, Hellenica, II. IV. 20, Dittenberger, op. cit. (second edition), 360, 5ff., 342, 15ff., etc. For autonomy with freedom, see Xenophon, Hellenica, III. I. 20ff.; Polybius, History, IV, 27, 5; XXI, 19, 9; XX, 7; etc.; and Dittenberger, op. cit. (first edition), 1:3,4; 6:15-17; 5:54, 55; 530:2.

2. Aeschylus, The Libation-Bearers, 809.

3. Herodotus, 7, 103.

4. Herodotus, 7, 135.

"On, ye sons of Hellas! Free your native land, free your children, your wives, the fanes of your fathers' gods, and the tombs of your ancestors. Now you battle for your all."¹

Freedom was commended wherever it was cherished, defended and won. Herodotus speaks admiringly of the Medes who "... proved their valour in fighting for freedom against the Assyrians; they cast off their slavery and won freedom."² Then he speaks highly of the Persians when they won freedom from the Medes: "The Persians had long been ill content that the Medes should rule them, and now having got them a champion they were glad to win their freedom."³ Then he speaks of the Athenians who won freedom from the Persians, "... now I must go further and return to the story which I began to tell, namely, how the Athenians were freed from their despots."⁴ And another historian commends the Spartans for their stand for freedom against the Athenians: "We [Spartans] became allies, however, not to the Athenians for the enslavement of the Hellenes, but to the Hellenes for their emancipation from the Persians!"⁵ To be a Greek meant to be a man who was willing to die rather than to submit to tyranny. The son of a Macedonian king declared, "... I myself am by descent a Greek, and I would not willingly see Hellas change her freedom for slavery."⁶ The Greeks felt that

1. Aeschylus, The Persians, 403.

2. Herodotus, 1, 95.

3. Herodotus, 1, 127.

4. Herodotus, 5, 62.

5. Thucydides, 3, 10.

6. Herodotus, 9, 45.

in freedom they had a just cause, almost a religious cause. It was something of which they could sing, as did Euripides:

"But when the laws are written, then the weak
and wealthy have alike but equal right.
Yea, even the weaker may fling back the scoff
Against the prosperous, if he be reviled;
And, armed with right, the less o'ercomes the great.
Thus Freedom speaks:¹ 'What man desires to bring
Good counsel for his country to the people?'"²

Gulin flatly designates ". . . freedom as an idea of Hellenic origin, because in the ethic of Greece and in Hellenistic religiousness it constituted the all-essential word."³ Ramsay's judgement is similar:

"No other ancient people aimed so steadfastly as the Greeks at freedom as the greatest good in life, and while it must be confessed that the order and even the safety of the State were sometimes jeopardised in the pursuit of individual freedom, and the freedom tended to degenerate into license and caprice, yet there was a certain atmosphere of liberty in a Greek city which is invigorating to breathe even in the pages of history and which seems to have lasted even in remote lands and alien surroundings so long as any shadow of Hellenic society remained."⁴

Schlier concludes, "ἐλευθερία wird ein 'Zauberwort' der griechischen Politic."⁵

The tradition of Grecian freedom was carried on not only by the Hellenes, but by their Roman rulers as well. Cicero, the governor of Cilicia, occasionally resident in Tarsus, said only a generation before Paul's birth, "Other nations may be able to endure slavery; but liberty is the very birthright of the Roman people."⁶ Living in

1. This was the formula with which the herald opened the popular assembly at Athens.

2. Euripides, Suppliants, 438.

3. Eelis Gideon Gulin, Die Freiheit in der Verkündigung des Paulus, Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie, Vol. XVIII, (1941), p. 459.

4. Ramsay, op. cit., p. 35. 5. Schlier, op. cit., (TWB), p. 488.

6. Cicero, Philippica, VI, 7, 19.

the midst of such an atmosphere, Paul developed a sincere and profound admiration for the love of freedom which the Greeks had exemplified as had no other people. And the Apostle carried this love of freedom into Christianity.

It may be said here in parenthesis that the Greeks never questioned the institution of slavery. It was accepted as a part of the order of existence. Aristotle spoke of the slave as "... one division of property."¹ He spoke of slavery as natural: "... one who is a human being belonging by nature not to himself but to another is by nature a slave . . ."² Although "ἐλευθερία" in Hellenism is first of all a political idea,³ it follows not at all that in the Hellenic preoccupation with political freedom there was concern for those of their own society who were not free.

F. The Stoic Conception of Freedom

In the Hellenistic period of Greek history the conception of freedom underwent a metamorphosis. In 320 B. C. a tall Semite from Phoenicia disembarked at Piraeus, the port city of Athens. He had been born in a Phoenician colony on Cyprus, but he remained the rest of his life—one quarter or one third of a century—in Athens. His name was Zeno, and he became the founder of the Stoic school of philosophy.⁴

"Freedom" in the days of the older Greek philosophers connoted

1. Aristotle, Politics, I. III. 1256 a 3.

2. Ibid., I. II. 1254 a 15.

3. Schlier, op. cit. (TWB), p. 484.

4. Information in this paragraph, et passim, taken from the class notes of John Baillie's course on the Stoics, Autumn Semester 1953, at the New College.

primarily the exercise of political rights, but in the time of Epictetus, under the Roman rule, it meant nothing more than the privilege to live the kind of life one pleased under the authority of the Imperial government."¹ Zeno, and the Stoics who came after him such as Epictetus, converted the idea of freedom into something of personal meaning. As Epictetus asks, "'At this time, is freedom anything but the right to live as we wish?' 'Nothing else.'"²

The change in the conception of freedom began with Zeno. Diogenes Laertius has an essay on Zeno in which he comments on Zeno's idea of freedom. The Stoics "declare that the wise man alone is free and bad men are slaves, freedom being the power of independent action, whereas slavery is privation of the same: though indeed there is also a second form of slavery consisting in subordination, and a third which implies possession of the slave as well as his subordination; the correlative of such servitude being lordship; and this too is evil. Moreover, according to them not only are the wise free, they are also kings; kingship being irresponsible rule, which none but the wise can maintain . . ."³ It is evident from this sketch of Zeno's doctrine that already the idea of political freedom had been exchanged for an idea of freedom which was personal. And this Stoicism was to become the dominant philosophy in the intellectual circles of the Greek and Roman world for the next half millenium. After Zeno, successive teachers of the school included Chrysippus of Cilicia,

1. W. A. Oldfather, Epictetus, (London, The Loeb Classical Library, William Heinemann, 1926), Vol. I, pp. 218, 219.

2. Ibid., II. 1. 23.

3. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 121, 122.

Cleanthes, Boethius, another Zeno, Antipater, Diogenes, and Apollodorus of Tarsus. For all of these men, as for Epictetus, freedom was the "greatest good".¹

There are five important Stoic diatribes about freedom:

1. Paradoxa Stoicorum, by Marcus Tullius Cicero, 106-43 B. C. Cicero was a student of the Stoic Posidonius, as was Athenodorus.
2. Every Good Man is Free, by Pseudo-Philo, (Philo Judaeus lived from 20? B. C. to A. D. 40?).
3. Of Freedom, by Epictetus, A. D. 50?-120?
4. On Nobility of Birth, by Plutarch, A. D. 46?-120?
5. On Slavery and Freedom, by Dio Chrysostom, A. D. 40?-120?

The five diatribes are similar in many respects, and it is possible that all of them were based on a diatribe taken from an earlier Stoic. Each of them teaches that the wise man is the free man, with Pseudo-Philo taking the deviationist line that it is the good man who is the free man. The discourse by Epictetus is the most thorough, the best written, and the most interesting. Paul died a generation earlier than Epictetus, but "the philosopher precisely in his doctrine of freedom was conscious of being the heir of the old teachers".² Epictetus' diatribe reveals much of the intellectual climate which must have existed in Paul's day. This is safe to conclude because a comparison of the post-Pauline discourses with those of the pre-Pauline era shows a development not of the central idea but of exposition alone.

1. Epictetus, IV, 1, 52.
2. Schmitz, op. cit., p. 10.

The Stoics concluded that though a man might be free from political oppression, still he might not be free in the highest sense of the word.¹ Seneca expressed it this way:

"But what better thing could you wish for than to break away from this slavery, --a slavery that oppresses us all, a slavery which even chattels of the lowest estate, born amid such degradation, strive in every possible way to strip off? In exchange for freedom they pay out the savings which they have scraped together by cheating their own bellies; shall you not be eager to attain liberty at any price, seeing that you claim it as your birthright? Why cast glances toward your strong-box? Liberty cannot be bought. It is therefore useless to enter in your ledger the item of "Freedom", for freedom is possessed neither by those who have bought it nor by those who have sold it. You must give this good to yourself, and seek it for yourself."²

The man politically free is still enslaved to compulsion (ἀνάγκη), that is, the power outside himself which shapes his life, the hindrance (κώλυμα), force (βία), fate (μοίρα) that can make a strong man ill, a wealthy man poor, or a powerful man weak. This necessity operates on man and builds or crushes him irrespective of his struggles to alleviate and modify its effects. Man is a prisoner of caprice and of circumstance. A so-called "free" man might also be enslaved to his desire (ῥέσις),³ a general word which includes longing (ἐπιθυμία)⁴ and passion (πάθος). "You, for example, who are able to turn others about, have you no master? Have you not as your master money, or a mistress, or a boy favourite, or the tyrant, or some friend of the tyrant?"⁵

1. Epictetus, IV, 1, 8-10.

2. Seneca, Moral Epistles, 80:4, 5.

3. Epictetus, IV, 1, 77; IV, 4, 33.

4. Ibid., IV, 1, 175; IV, 4, 1. 5. Ibid., II, 1, 28.

Men are slaves to the non-essential things which pertain to them, the things for which they crave and love and yearn. All these Epictetus groups as one and terms "the alien things" (τὰ

ἀλλότρετα).¹ If a man is to be truly free, he must escape "the alien things"—both the compulsion which grasps him from without and the desire which wells up from within.

The Stoics devoted their energy and mind to the solution of this dual problem. But underlying all their reasoning and efforts for self-control is the ever-present principle that man ought to be free. The driving force of their entire philosophy is that freedom is essential—at any cost—that it is worth more than anything, more than money, fame, health, position, property, wife, children, life, or pleasure. Epictetus was willing to sacrifice even truth for freedom, as he frankly admits, "If indeed one had to be deceived into learning that among things external and independent of our free choice none concerns us, I, for my part, should consent to a deception which would result in my living thereafter serenely and without turmoil . . ."² This goes too far, and it is not characteristic of Epictetus' usual attitude, but it does illustrate the supreme importance he placed on freedom.

The right of a man to be free was grounded in God. In Epictetus' mind, God was "an almost incredible mixture of Theism, Pantheism, and Polytheism",³ but whatever he was, it was in him that freedom was grounded. The tyrant says, "I will show you that I am

1. Ibid., IV, 1, 81; IV, 1, 87.

2. Ibid., I, 4, 27.

3. Oldfather, op. cit., p. xxiv.

master'. 'How can you be my master? Zeus has set me free. Or do you really think that he was likely to let his own son be made a slave?'¹ The basic Stoic assumption was that in freedom they had a doctrine which was right, and more than right--divine. Because of this axiomatic proposition, Stoicism took on the characteristics of a religion. It had moral content as well as divine justification because the road to freedom followed wisdom and virtue. As early as the sixth century, Periander, despot of Corinth, wrote as one of his 2000 maxims, "Freedom is a clear conscience".² Only freedom was worthy of full commitment and of utter devotion. It was the path of virtue, the way of wisdom, and the purpose of God.

The Stoics taught that the way to meet necessity is to recognize it and bow to it. Where necessity rules there is no hope for freedom.

"If I limit myself only to this which is my own, then my freedom is guaranteed to me, since within this I am clearly the master. But this means that the boundary of my real freedom is at the same time the boundary of this inner realm; it is the not I, the alien, the ἀλλότριον --and only this--which restricts me--and not by chance and occasionally but essentially: where it begins the area of my unconditioned power and freedom ends."³

Every man must meet necessity, but man, unlike animals, can meet it with dignity. Epictetus said that one must die as a spectator leaves the arena after witnessing the contest--the show is over and he is willing to depart. In Seneca's words, "This is the

1. Epictetus, I, 19, 9.

2. Periander, Stobaeus, Florilegium, XXIV, 12.

3. Hans Jonas, Augustin und das paulinische Freiheitsproblem, Ein philosophischer Beitrag zur Genesis der christlich-abend-ländischen Freiheitsidee, (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1930), p. 9.

sacred obligation by which we are bound—to submit to the human lot, and not to be disquieted by those things which we have no power to avoid. We have been born under a monarchy; to obey God is freedom."¹ Or, more succinctly, "The willing are led by fate, the reluctant dragged."² Man's only recourse when subjected to compulsion is to endure and bear it.

When a man is confronted with the desires which well up from within himself, however, he has the power at least to control them. The first step is to ascertain by reason what lies inside, within the province of desire, and what lies outside, in the province of compulsion. "Therefore we are forced to define freedom as the knowledge of what is allowable and what is forbidden, and slavery as ignorance of what is allowed and what is not."³ This is to distinguish what is possible from what is impossible in order to concentrate one's efforts on the possible. "You understand, even if I do not say more, that, when once we have driven away all that excites or affrights us, there ensues unbroken tranquillity and enduring freedom . . ."⁴ This will result in the active containment of the possible by the wise man and will result in freedom. "Therefore, the wise are permitted to do anything whatsoever they wish, while the foolish attempt to do what they wish although it

1. Seneca, De Vita Beata, 15, 7.
2. Seneca, Moral Epistles, 107, 11.
3. Dio Chrysostom, Fourteenth Discourse, 18.
4. Seneca, De Vita Beata, 3, 4.

is not permissible; so that it follows of necessity that the wise are free and are allowed to act as they wish, the ignorant are slaves and do that which is not allowable for them."¹ "The paradoxical proposition that only the wise man is really free, and its opposite, that only he is a slave whose will is not in his own power—that is a theme which runs through the speeches and tracts of the Stoics with many variations."²

Freedom, then, is attained not only by resignation to compulsion, but by an active elimination of everything but the will, because ". . . In the region of assent you are free from hindrance and restraint."³ This freedom of the will is found, 1. by the control of the self. "You ask what this freedom is? It means . . . possessing supreme power over oneself. And it is a priceless good to be master of oneself."⁴ And the freedom of the will is found, 2. by the isolation of the self. "Liberty is having a mind . . . that separates itself from all external things in order that man may not have to live his life in disquietude, fearing everybody's laughter, everybody's tongue."⁵ Jonas paraphrases the Stoic attitude: "The being given over to one's self, in the sense of limiting oneself purely to oneself, to what is one's very own, is freedom. Of myself I can be absolutely certain."⁶ The Stoic

1. Dio Chrysostom, Fourteenth Discourse, 17.

2. Johannes Weiss, Die Christliche Freiheit nach der Verkündigung des Apostels Paulus, (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1902), p. 8.

3. Epictetus, IV, 1, 69. 4. Seneca, Moral Epistles, 75, 18.

5. Seneca, De Constantia, 19, 2. Cf. Epictetus, II, 23, 43.

6. Jonas, op. cit., p. 11.

rule of life is condensed by Epictetus into a famous phrase, ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου, "endure and renounce" or "bear and forbear".

So the Stoics succeeded in converting the old idea that freedom pertained most of all to the political realm to the new idea that freedom could be a personal possession. Freedom then became synonymous not with ἡσυχία, ἡσυχία, σωτηρία or αὐτονομία, but with ἀταραξία, calmness;¹ ἀπάθεια, dispassionateness;² and εὐποία, serenity.³ This development is significant for Christian doctrine because Paul's idea of freedom, like that of the Stoics, was also not political but personal. Freedom for the Christian, as for the Stoic, meant more than equality, freedom of speech, and democratic government—it meant something for the individual himself.

G. Parallels between Stoicism and Paulinism

The Stoics consciously attempted to meet the problem of life no matter how stark and harsh without shrinking or evasion. They faced life with resolution, courage and nobility. To a large degree they succeeded in living through "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" with poise and equanimity. Their constant struggle was marked with high moral tone. They honored integrity, loyalty, generosity, sympathy, but above all, courage. They had a deep appreciation of wisdom and reason, and consequently eschewed

1. Epictetus, I, 24, 8; II, 1, 21.

2. Ibid., III, 15, 2.

3. Ibid., I, 1, 22; II, 16, 41. See II, 18, 28, "... the prize is a kingdom, freedom (ἐλευθερία), serenity (εὐποία), peace (ἀταραξία)." Also III, 15, 12, "tranquillity (ἡσυχία), freedom (ἐλευθερία) and calm (ἀταραξία)."

the fanatic, the ritualistic, the orgiastic, and the esoteric. Stoicism produced a breed of men who were loftier and superior to any in the pagan world.

"It is the Stoics who emancipated mankind from its subjugation to despotic rule, and whose enlightened and elevated views of life bridged the chasm that separates the ancient from the Christian state, and led the way to freedom They made it known that there is a will superior to the collective will of man, and a law that overrules those of Solon and Lycurgus Before God, there is neither Greek nor barbarian, neither rich nor poor, and the slave is as good as his master, for by birth all men are free; they are citizens of that universal commonwealth which embraces all the world, brethren of one family and children of God."¹

It would seem on a priori grounds that Paul as a Jew endeavoring to fulfill the law would have an admiration and a respect for the ". . . Gentiles who have not the law [yet] do by nature what the law (written on their hearts) requires".² It may have been because of this admiration for the pagan culture that Paul was the apostle who best took to heart his Master's injunction to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . .".³ It has been shown that Paul was reared in a university city where Stoicism was the dominant philosophy, and that he came into face to face confrontation with Stoics in his travels. Paul lived a year and a half in Corinth, the capital city of the province of Achaia (which included all of the Peloponnesus and much of the southern part of continental Greece). The proconsul of this wealthy area was Gallio, a distinguished Stoic. He was the elder brother of Seneca (the Stoic tutor to young Nero), and to him Seneca dedicated his diatribe, De Vita Beata.⁴

1. Acton, op. cit., p. 24. 2. Romans 2:14, 15.

3. Matthew 28:19.

4. Seneca, De Vita Beata, 1, 1.

Gallio gained this eminent position in Corinth in A. D. 52, but died by his own hand—the typical Stoic fashion—in A. D. 66, when Nero, now the emperor, turned against him and his brother and sought their lives. Paul met Gallio personally, and was on the point of making use of his opportunity to speak to him, when the proconsul decided that he had more important affairs to attend to than to listen to the finer points of what he considered to be Jewish irrelevancies.¹

Paul thought enough of the Stoics to use their material in one of his sermons. When Paul gave his sermon about "the unknown God" on the Areopagus in Athens (probably the bare rock hill which rises above the agora and below the Acropolis), he spoke to a group which included "some also of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers."² To them Paul said that God "is not far from each one of us, for 'In him we live and move and are'; as even some of your poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring'."³ The first quotation is from the Stoic Posidonius,⁴ the teacher of Athenodorus of Tarsus. The second quotation is from the Stoic Aratus,⁵ who came from Soli, a seaport in Cilicia near Tarsus. Aratus' verse was in turn quoted from Cleanthes' famous Hymn to Zeus.⁶ The idea that man contained something of the divine within him was widely taught throughout the

1. Acts 18:12-17.

2. Acts 17:18.

3. Acts 17:27, 28.

4. E. Norden, Agnostos Theos, p. 19.

5. Phaenomena 5.

6. Line 4.

writings of the Stoics.¹ It is possible that Paul had become acquainted with the teaching of these two Stoics, Posidonius and Cleanthes, by the actual perusal of their writings rather than by hearsay because he seems to have in mind the source in the case of the second citation. And his reference to "some of your poets" as the source of his second citation may indicate that he knew that Aratus had quoted the verse from Cleanthes' earlier hymn. In the least, these two citations by Paul, both from Stoic sources, are direct proofs that he had had contact with the philosophy of the Stoa.

An indirect indication that Paul had had contact with the Stoa is in his use of words which the Stoics had developed and popularized.

αὐτάρκεια, contentment, "a perfect condition of life in which no aid or support is needed",² is a word which is never found in the Septuagint, or in other Greek versions of the Old Testament or Apocrypha. But Paul picks the word out of Stoic philosophy and uses it.³ Or φύσις nature, for example, a word which does not occur in the Septuagint except for some references in the Apocrypha.

Paul makes frequent use of this Stoic concept.⁴ Paul also uses

Stoic words like αὐτάρκης, self-sufficient,⁵ συνέιδησις,

1. Epictetus, I, 13, 4, "Do you not remember what you are, and over whom you rule—that they are kinsmen, that they are brothers by nature, that they are the offspring of Zeus?" See also, I, 14, 6; Seneca, Moral Epistles, 31, 11; 41, 2; 62, 12.

2. Thayer, op. cit., p. 84.

3. II Corinthians 9:8.

4. Rom. 1:26, 2:14, 27, 11:21, 24 (thrice), I Cor. 11:14, Gal. 2:15, 4:8, Eph. 2:3.

5. Philippians 4:11.

conscience,¹ λειτουργία, duty,² λόγος, reason,³
and ἐλευθερία, freedom.

Finally, there seem to be parallels of thought between some of Paul's ideas and the Stoic philosophy. Paul adopts a Stoic attitude toward self-discipline. It has been pointed out⁴ that the Apostle's advocacy of the unmarried state is similar to the Stoic teaching, even to the use of the same word. Paul wrote the Corinthians,

"Are you free from a wife? Do not seek marriage I mean, brethren, the appointed time has grown very short; from now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none . . ."⁵

And,

"I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon / you, but to promote good order and your undivided (ἀπερίσπαστως) devotion to the Lord."⁶

Epictetus wrote,

"But in such an order of things as the present, which is like that of a battle-field, it is a question, perhaps, if the Cynic ought not to be free from distraction (ἀπερίσπαστος), wholly devoted to the service of God, free to go about among men, not tied down by the private duties of men, nor involved in relationships which he cannot violate and still maintain his role as a good and excellent man, whereas, on the other hand, if he observes them, he will destroy the messenger, the scout, the herald of the gods, that he is."⁷

ἀπερίσπαστος

And Paul's heedlessness of his environment is also akin to the Stoic

1. Acts 23:1, 24:16, Rom. 2:15, 9:1, 13:5, I Cor. 8:7, 10, 12, 10:25, 27, 28, 29, II Cor. 1:12, 4:2, 5:11. See William Sanday and Arthur Cayley Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, (Fifth Edition; Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1911), pp. 60, 61 for Pauline use of Stoic words.

2. II Cor. 9:12, Phil. 2:17, 30.

3. I Cor. 14:36, Gal. 6:6, Col. 3:16, and elsewhere.

4. J. Weiss, op. cit., (Christliche Freiheit), p. 26, Carl Clemen, Primitive Christianity and its Non-Jewish Sources, translated by R. G. Nisbet, (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1912), pp. 55, 56.

5. I Cor. 7:28, 29. 6. I Cor. 7:35. 7. Epictetus, III, 22, 69.

attitude.

"Not that I complain of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content (αὐτάρκης). I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want."¹

And in the *Dissertations*, the question is asked,

"And how is it possible for a man who has nothing, who is naked, without home or hearth, in squalor, without a slave, without a city, to live serenely (εὐπολά)?"

And Epictetus answers in Diogenes' words,

"I am without a home, without a city, without property, without a slave; I sleep on the ground; I have neither wife nor children, no miserable governor's mansion, but only earth, and sky, and one rough cloak. Yet what do I lack? Am I not free from pain and fear, am I not free? When has anyone among you seen me failing to get what I desire, or falling into what I would avoid?"²

Anyone who cares to check the contexts from which the above references are taken will immediately discover that Paul and Epictetus are talking about things which are only superficially alike, and that they diverge in their motivations for talking about them. Still, there may be at least a tangential relation, and this suggests some interconnection.³ Both preached an equal brotherhood.⁴ Both experienced tempestuous inner conflicts.⁵ And there is stylistic congruity.⁶

1. Philippians 4:11, 12. 2. Epictetus, III, 22, 45-48.

3. It is unlikely that Epictetus was influenced by Christianity, although he twice mentions it in the *Dissertations*. See Oldfather, *op. cit.*, p. xxvi.

4. Gal. 3:28, Col. 3:11; Epictetus, II, 1, 23. See Adolf Bonhöffer, *Epiktet und das Neue Testament*, (Giessen, Verlag von Alfred Töpelmann, vormals J. Ricker, 1911), pp. 306, 307.

5. Rom. 5:15, Epictetus, II, 26, 1. See Clemen, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

6. Hans Windisch, *Der zweite Korintherbrief*, (Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1924), p. 126 show several stylistic parallels between II Cor. 3:17 and Epictetus, II, 2, 14; II, 8, 1; II, 13, 3.

H. Differences between Stoicism and Paulinism

Epictetus knew more about freedom than Paul ever did. He made it central to his philosophy. "The words 'free' (adjective and verb) and 'freedom' appear some 130 times in Epictetus, with a relative frequency about six times that of their occurrence in the New Testament . . ."¹ Even though Paul uses freedom with a significantly higher relative frequency than the rest of the New Testament, he never made the idea central to his thought. Epictetus did so, and spent his life devising fascinating variations on this single theme. Epictetus knew more about freedom than Paul ever did, but that was all he knew. Epictetus' idea of freedom, while more intense, was less meaningful than Paul's. Epictetus talks about freedom, Paul bears witness to it. It seems clear that while the two streams run parallel for a way, their sources and their destinations are quite distinct.

Paul as a Jew would not see Stoicism as an advance over his own religion. The Judaic heritage proclaims a God who controls history, and that there is the possibility of altering history by repentance toward the God who is over history. The Stoics had no real god but themselves, and therefore had no option but to submit to all which they could not regulate. The Hebrews sought freedom from sin; the Stoics sought freedom from fate. Sin was so far from the Greek mind that they hardly had a word to fit the concept. They had a word for insolence ($\psi\alpha\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$), for corruption ($\mu\iota\sigma\theta\omicron\mu\alpha$), and for error, mistake, fault ($\sigma\mu\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\alpha$),

1. Oldfather, op. cit., p. xvii.

but nothing the equivalent of the Hebrew conception of sin.¹

Ἀμαρτία literally means missing the mark, and is the equivalent of *חטא*, which it translates in the Septuagint.

But there is no Greek word which is the equivalent of *טמא*, ceremonial impurity, and even *ἁμαρτία* was used by the

Greeks to mean a failure of judgement rather than a transgression of the divine ordinances. It is as difficult to express the idea of sin in Greek as it is to express the idea of abstract freedom

in Hebrew. Freedom to a Jew would be an alien concept, and unless

the use of the word were required by existential experience and

environmental necessity, he would avoid applying it to spiritual

matters. Since the meaning of freedom is determined by that from

which one is freed, so a Jewish interpretation of freedom would

necessarily be distinct from a Greek interpretation, even though

the same jargon were used. And another difference between the

two traditions is that while suicide for the Jew meant facing

God's judgement, for the Stoic it meant an amoral escape. Epictetus

said, "Now whenever He does not provide the necessities for

existence, He sounds the recall; he has thrown open the door and

says to you, 'Go'. Where? To nothing you need fear, but back

to that from which you came, to what is friendly and akin to you,

to the physical elements."² Therefore, taking these things into

consideration, it is unlikely that Paul as a Jew could have derived

his idea of freedom from the Stoics.

1. From John Baillie's class in Senior Divinity at New College, March 8 and 10, 1954.

2. Epictetus, Dissertations, III, 13, 14; also II, 1, 19 and 20.

For Paul as a Christian it would have been more difficult for him to find his spiritual roots in Stoicism. Paul could no more have built his idea of freedom on Stoicism than he could have on Judaism, because they are both based on the strength, the inflexibility, the hardness of the inner man. Self-sufficiency is for the Stoic the sure guarantee of freedom. But it is just this "solution" which constitutes the problem for the Christian, because self-will veers toward pride, and pride is sin, and sin is bondage. Seneca dreamed that he was so supremely self-sufficient that he felt he could rival God. "'Yet,' you say, 'many sorrows, things dreadful and hard to bear, do befall us.' 'Yes, because I could not withdraw you from their path, I have armed your minds to withstand them all; endure with fortitude. In this you may outstrip God; he is exempt from enduring evil, while you are superior to it.'"¹ In the very point where Seneca imagined that his freedom had attained its apogee, the Christian would realize himself most a captive. Neither Stoicism nor Judaism offered a sure ground for certainty to satisfy the yearning of Paul. And Stoicism offered even less than Judaism because the Stoic had to find all his resources in himself or he was lost, while Judaism at least potentially believed in a God who would someday intervene on man's behalf. Even though Epictetus believed that the common man could attain a reasonable amount of freedom by the arduous application

1. Seneca, De Providentia, VI, 6.

of himself,¹ he also found that the triumphant life in freedom was much more elusive.² The Stoic falsely believed that the insufficiency of the will stemmed from an alien influence, but the Christian was convinced that it was the will itself which was disabled by division against itself. Judaism was a bondage from which Paul felt he could not escape, and Stoicism did not advance beyond Judaism because it also was limited by the same obstacle—man.

And like Judaism, Stoicism as a philosophy of works resulted not only in uncertainty but in death. The Christian viewpoint toward Judaism saw that the legalistic religion could not avoid the just consequence of death. The practice of Judaism displayed the uncontrollable forces which motivate man's innermost self. Death was the penalty for failure. Stoicism never made the pretense that it could overcome death, and so turned the distasteful reality into an asset, and accepted death as an escape. The end result of both systems was the same, however, no matter what one thinks of death.

1. Epictetus, Dissertations, IV, 1, 68-75.

2. Ibid., II, 19-24-25. "Show me a man who though sick is happy, though in danger is happy, though dying is happy, though condemned to exile is happy, though in disrepute is happy. Show him! By the gods, I would fain see a Stoic. But you cannot show me a man completely so fashioned; then show me at least one who is becoming so fashioned, one who has begun to tend in that direction; do me this favour; do not begrudge an old man the sight of that spectacle which to this day I have never seen."

There are other reasons why a Christian would be dissatisfied with Stoicism. It denied not only the possibility but the validity of grace. "Paul, wholly in the sense of all of early Christianity, conceives of freedom as a marvelous act of God, as something which lies outside of the natural abilities of men. The Stoics grounded their conception psychologically. The natural powers of man can be edified to freedom through guidance, exercise, and inurement. For Paul freedom is a charisma, for them a result of education."¹ Moreover, Paul was involved in finding freedom from his past; the Stoics only with finding freedom for the moment. For Paul the question of freedom was historical, existential, obligatory; for the Stoics it was philosophic, experimental, optional. Freedom for the Christian was an experience, a moral change, a revolutionary religious event. For the Stoic, freedom was a product of enlightenment, the result of intellectual persuasion and growth. Freedom for the Christian was the result of despair, the result of being stripped of every hold on the world, the result of radical destruction.² For the Stoic it was the result of unimpaired self-possession and self-sufficiency. The Christian used his freedom to meet stress; the Stoic tried to find his freedom by a braced determination not to face stress.

A synthesis of Judaism and Stoicism could by no means produce Christianity, or even Christianity's doctrine of freedom.

1. J. Weiss, op. cit., (Christliche Freiheit), p. 22.

2. Jonas, op. cit., p. 13.

That synthesis could and did contribute to Philonic philosophy, but that emerged, not as Christianity, but as "a Stoicizing Platonism with a penchant for Pythagorean number-jugglery".¹ Philo, the Hellenistic but orthodox Jew from Alexandria, attempted to show that Judaism encompassed and surpassed the best of Greek philosophy.

The Philonic school declared that the key to freedom is not wisdom but goodness. Pseudo-Philo wrote,

"He who always acts sensibly, always acts well: he who always acts well, always acts rightly: he who always acts rightly, also acts impeccably, blamelessly, faultlessly, irreproachably, harmlessly, and, therefore, will have the power to do anything, and to live as he wishes, and he who has this power must be free. But the good man always acts sensibly, and, therefore, he alone is free."²

But what is goodness? Pseudo-Philo does not specifically answer the question, but he hints at "an oracle higher than Zeno".³ This oracle is undoubtedly the Jewish law, for the most important example of the good man which the author suggests in this treatise is the Essene. It is of the Essenes that Pseudo-Philo writes,

"But the ethical part they study very industriously, taking for their trainers the laws of their fathers, which could not possibly have been conceived by the human soul without divine inspiration. In these they are instructed at all other times, but particularly on the seventh days. For that day has been set apart to be kept holy and on it they abstain from all other work and proceed to sacred spots which they call synagogues [They believe that] the Godhead is the cause of all good things and nothing bad."⁴

Philonism intuitively taught that freedom is found in God.

"Let us hear the voice of Sophocles in words which are as true as any Delphic oracle, 'God and no mortal is my Sovereign'. For in very truth he who has God alone for his leader, he alone is free . . ."⁵

1. Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 211.

2. Pseudo-Philo, Every Good Man is Free, 59.

3. Ibid., 160.

4. Ibid., 80-84.

5. Ibid., 19, 20.

The Philonic school recognized the affinities between a philosophy built on one's own endeavors and their own legalistic religion, and attempted by the reconciliation of the two to win the Greeks to the law. If Paul could not find reconciliation with God through the one, he could not find it through the other; and his experience of freedom was not the result of either.

Paul as a Christian could not have derived his idea of freedom from Stoicism not only because Stoicism was a homocentric philosophy based on the wisdom and strength of purpose of the individual, but because its conception of freedom was supine and abject negativism. Epictetus said that "He is free who lives as he wills, who is subject neither to compulsion, nor hindrance, nor force, whose choices are unhampered, whose desires attain their end, whose aversions do not fall into what they would avoid."¹ All these enemies of freedom are beyond the control of the person. The only thing within his power is his own attitude toward necessity. Therefore, to find freedom, the individual must reduce his concept of freedom's scope until it comprehends only the tiny area of his own will. Stoicism reduced its concept of real freedom to a pin point. "For freedom is not acquired by satisfying yourself with what you desire, but by destroying your desire."² The Stoics put all their trust in a small island of the self which was unassailable from the outside. The Stoic had to kill his desire before it killed

1. Epictetus, Dissertations, IV, 1, 1.

2. Ibid., IV, 1, 175.

his freedom. Freedom became desirelessness. As a soldier tells himself before battle that every man must someday die, thereby slaying himself beforehand in order to avoid undue shock in experiencing the reality, so the Stoic attempted to find perfect freedom by being dead in every respect but the fact. Liberation became annihilation, death became freedom, the end was the ultimate escape. Seneca said, "Above all, I have taken pains that nothing should keep you here against your will; the way out lies open. If you do not choose to fight, you may run away. Therefore of all things I have deemed necessary for you, I have made nothing easier than dying."¹ Epictetus said, "The poor flesh is subjected to rough treatment, and then again to smooth. If you do not find this profitable, the door stands open; if you do find it profitable, bear it."² Many famous Stoics took their own lives: Zeno himself, Cleanthes, Seneca, and his brother Gallio. Paul could not have derived his conception of freedom from a Stoicism which mitigated death. He would first have had to kill his God, because it was God who kept death from being an escape for every man who had not found freedom from sin during life. Had Paul actually borrowed his doctrine from the Stoics, some of them at least were singularly uninstructed in their own philosophy, because they were unable to grasp what the Apostle was saying in regard to the resurrection when he preached to them in Athens.³ The Stoics believed that

1. Seneca, De Providentia, VI, 7.

2. Epictetus, Dissertations, II, 1, 19.

3. Acts 17:18, 32.

man by right has no master but himself. This was their false and fatal premise. Man is not a creature, but a self-determined, self-ruling, self-willing god. The Stoic rejected every reminder of creaturehood--everything which acted upon him from outside. He uncreated himself until he was left with his will alone, and then discovered to his dismay that even his will was too eruptive to be contained by the self. The ultimate proof of the godliness which remained to him was the removal of this last vestige of creatureliness. The Stoic declared by his actions that he was Creator if only in the power to uncreate himself. It is difficult to suppose that Paul could have evolved his doctrine of victorious freedom out of a doctrine of surrender.

The second decisive difference between the Stoic and the Christian concept of freedom is that the Stoic never had the freedom to commit himself, to involve himself, to give himself, to lose himself in a cause greater than his own freedom. The Stoic never dared to love. He could not permit himself any affection for anything except those things which would not matter if they had to be forsaken. Essentially Stoicism failed in courage. It limited its commitment as much as possible to avoid feeling the pain of disappointment, separation, or loss. Thus the Stoic tacitly confessed that man alone can endure only so much brutality before he collapses under it. The Stoic confessed that man alone is not able to survive the full buffetings of existence. Man's only hope for tranquility is to live without passion (ἀπαθής) and without needs (ἀπρὸς ἑαίς).

One's life motto must be like that of Epictetus, "Endure and renounce". Thus it is that the Stoic's equanimity is less than the disturbance which troubles it. The Christian's peace in the face of trouble is something more than the disturbance. Contrast Paul and Epictetus:

"O death, where is thy victory?

O death, where is thy sting?"¹

"What is death? A bugbear. Turn it about and learn what it is; see, it does not bite. The paltry body must be separated from the bit of spirit, either now or later, just as it existed apart from it before."²

The Christian is willing to risk self-commitment, not because the pain of possible disappointment is less for him than for the Stoic, nor because it may occur less frequently for him, but because Christ is Lord also of suffering. Through Christ it is possible to meet with every eventuality because he has undergone the worst himself and has triumphed. It is as Weiss wrote:

It is certainly a Christian duty to be ready at all times to be separated and willingly to surrender what is demanded of us. But that is not to say that so long as God leaves us wife and child, office and position, health and ability, we should only half-heartedly enjoy them. The weary and pessimistic view that all is nothing--this view we do not want to share The solitary scholar who lives only for the culture and the cult of his own ego seems to us just as abnormal and unhealthy as the monk."³

Thus Christian freedom far surpasses Stoic freedom. Paul as a

1. I Corinthians 15:55.

2. Epictetus, Dissertations, II, 1, 17.

3. J. Weiss, op. cit., (Christliche Freiheit), p. 27.

Jew never doubted that freedom was found only in God; his problem was finding God, not escaping non-freedom. His experience in Christ proved to him not only that freedom is indeed found in God, but that it is granted by him as well. Paul found his freedom in the fact of his creaturehood; the essence of freedom was in having a Creator, a master. Freedom in Christ is joyous, festive, fulsome; the freedom to participate and to dare. The creature find^s himself in the Creator not just as a baby at rest in its father's arms, but as a son with a father's task to accomplish. The paradox of finding freedom by losing it was proven true by experience. By willing God's will the Christian is free to do whatever he desires. Freedom is not contingent upon one's own self-mastery but upon being mastered by God. The will does not have to be narrowed until it is reduced to a pitifully tiny dimension which even then is not small enough to be manageable; but in God the will is allowed to enlarge toward the expansive breadth of God's will, and all one's energy, drive, and intensity is evoked in developing this will. This is freedom.

The Stoics also lacked the drive to alter what can and must be altered. The Christian is encouraged to change those things which can be changed.

"The God of the Stoics was identified with inexorable law: the God of the Christians made law, and is in all respects superior to and unaffected by it. The only virtue of the Stoic was cheerful submission to an order which neither he nor God himself could modify: the Christian, during his life on earth, is endowed with

a will that is above law, and his virtues consist in a free obedience to all the precepts of the Divine law, which is summed up in the single principle of love, love of God and love of your neighbor."¹

Paul does not set limits and borders on God's power. Paul does not talk about a partial freedom. He does not retreat or withdraw. When there is opportunity to change an unfavorable situation, Paul quickly makes the most of the opportunity. Contrast Paul's quick decision to appeal to Caesar² for the protection of Roman law in order to escape the danger of assassination at the hands of the Jews with Epictetus who scorns the man who seeks deliverance from flogging by taking recourse to law and crying, "'O Caesar, what do I have to suffer under your peaceful rule? let us go before the Proconsul.'"³ The drive to change what must be changed is also illustrated by the Christian attitude toward freedom itself. Paul fervently presses men to accept the Christ in whom they find their freedom, while Epictetus at the close of his great dissertation on freedom leaves the reader with a careless suggestion, "Anyway, try it at least; there is no disgrace in making the attempt."⁴ The Christian had a social responsibility which the Stoic accepted only when it was necessary. Paul says that man is free for the service of God and his fellow man--and this is not a Stoic doctrine.

1. William Benett, Freedom and Liberty, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1920), p. 349.

2. Acts 25:11.

3. Epictetus, Dissertations, III, 22, 55.

4. Ibid., IV, 1, 177.

I. Paul's Debt to the Stoics

What then is to be concluded about the relation between the Stoic and the Pauline doctrine of freedom? The greatest Stoic contribution to Pauline Christianity was the word itself, *ἐλευθερία*. Paul, like Philo, adopted the word not because it was a native Hebrew concept, but because it was compatible with latent Hebrew ideas. "In Paul's doctrine of freedom it is, I think, only the expression, not the thought, that is borrowed; but his dictum regarding the equality of the sexes (Gal. 3:28, Col. 3:11) is in part derived from foreign, and there again Stoic, influences, all the more probably as Paul had not worked out the full consequences of the principle."¹ Paul did have a predilection for the word, and the word could only have come from Stoicism. "For the circumstance that freedom has a very different basis with the Stoics and with Paul is no reason why he should not partially—one must always repeat this qualification—be indebted to his phraseology to Stoicism, which had such a pre-eminent influence at Tarsus."² Secondly, Paul in a way came near the Stoic method of apprehending freedom. They said that to be in bondage was to go against the inner law of one's being; Paul said that to be in bondage was to go against the Spirit of Christ. Both perceived that freedom can be gained only within a context of discipline. Thirdly, the Stoics had personalized freedom—they had made it something which could be possessed

1. Clemen, op. cit., p. 366. 2. Ibid., p. 61.

by every individual. Paul took over this idea without criticism. Fourthly, Stoicism was an important step in man's understanding of himself. Stoicism, like Judaism, revealed the inability of man to wrest his own salvation out of the hands of the gods. Paul perceived in Greek philosophy a reflection of his own experience in the Hebrew religion. Finally, Paul adopted the concept of freedom from the Stoics because it formed a bridge, a point d'appui between himself and his Gentile hearers. Thus, the Stoic phrases which Paul used in his letters are carry-overs from his evangelistic preaching to the Greeks. The Apostle may have been given a hearing in public in a Greek colonial city because he was at first taken to be a Cynic or a Stoic peripatetic. These men would harangue crowds on semi-religious themes such as self-discipline and meditation, and in appearance—worn clothes, staves, travel-stained—may have been like the Apostle. Would Paul hesitate to speak of freedom, or conscience, or reason, when he could better hold his audience by mentioning these expected terms? Justin Martyr said, "All that has been well said belongs to us Christians," and Paul used the same rationale when he "baptized into Christ" ideas of heathen origin.

So it was that Paul was influenced by Stoicism primarily for an expression unthought but thinkable for a Jew. Even the substance of Paul's doctrine is to some degree aided by the Gentile idea of freedom, "although for the most part only in the direction which his mind had taken, or would have taken, apart from philosophy."¹

1. Ibid., p. 73.

Paul's first task was to set forth Jesus Christ, and he used all material within reach to amplify his significance. Paul never consciously set out to synthesize the best of east and west, of Israel and Greece—he drew everything together into Christ.

The synthesis was a by-product. Stoicism was not the foundation of his idea of freedom, it was an adjunct; it was not the matter, it was a means. Yet Paul held the pagan idea of freedom in such high esteem that he used it even at the risk of having it paganly misunderstood by the Gentiles to whom he addressed himself.

Freedom was more than a point d'appui, it was intrinsically valid. But freedom was valid because God had validated it in Christ, and for no other reason. But the Greeks had been right in proclaiming freedom as "god-built",¹ and Paul recognized that they were right, and reincorporated their profound insight back into the revelation of the God who had inspired it.

It has been possible to trace the origin of Paul's idea of freedom to its several sources. He found in Hebrew history or in pagan custom the simile of emancipation from slavery; he depended on sacral manumission for one expression and upon the custom of the Roman aristocracy for another; he borrowed the word itself and its use as a quasi-religious term from the Stoics. But where did his idea of freedom from law, sin and death arise? This freedom never came into question for the Stoics, and the Hebrews never posed the problem in these terms. There is no

1. Pindar, Odes, I, lines 62, 63.

trace of Pauline dependence on the Stoics for this idea.¹ Freedom from law is something new in the history of thought, and it was Paul who first grasped the idea and proclaimed it to the world. The ancient Greeks heralded freedom from tyranny, and the Stoics freedom from circumstance. The Hebrews by implication declared that their God was a God of freedom, but it was Paul who first came to realize that freedom in God meant freedom from religion. What was the origin of this idea? To this question the next chapter is directed.

III. Paul's Conversion to Christianity: "Called to Freedom"²

Paul was consciously aware that his doctrine of freedom stemmed from Jesus. He explicitly acknowledges that Christ is the author of liberty: "Christ Jesus has set me free";³ "a freedman of the Lord";⁴ "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom";⁵ "our freedom which we have in Christ";⁶ "for freedom Christ".⁷ But the Apostle's acknowledgement of the source of his freedom does not explain how he came into its possession. Nor does it explain how he learned such freedom might exist. It has so far been shown that there is no evidence for believing that Paul found his doctrine of freedom from law in the Stoics, but that he says he found it in Christ. But it will also be shown that Paul had learned that freedom from law existed even before he had the vision of Christ which resulted in

1. Bonhöffer, op. cit., ably refutes J. Weiss on this point, pp. 164, 165.

2. Galatians 5:13.

3. Romans 8:2. Cf. Galatians 5:1.

4. I Corinthians 7:22.

5. II Corinthians 3:17.

6. Galatians 2:4.

7. Galatians 5:1.

his conversion.

A. Christianity Declares a New Freedom

The doctrine of freedom from law is unique because it is found only in Christianity. It was unknown within Judaism and unthought of by philosophy. It is unique also because the time of its origin can be dated to within a few years and because its inception must be credited to a certain few men. Paul was the individual who first promulgated the idea as such, and he was the individual who maintained and developed it despite opposition strong enough almost to overthrow it. But while Paul was the first to apply the Greek philosophical word to the idea, and the first to crystallize the doctrine, he was not the first who tried to express it. He had a forerunner who with a living object lesson dramatically and powerfully presented the possibility of freedom from the law to the young Jew, and without whom Paul might never have perceived the inner significance of Christianity.

According to early tradition Paul was a close contemporary of Jesus, only five or six years younger.¹ They both must have been in Jerusalem at the same time on several occasions. Yet Paul never mentions having seen Jesus before his resurrection, and there is no reason to suppose that he had.² It is known that Gamaliel, Paul's old teacher, had occasion to sit in judgement upon

1. Smith, op. cit., p. 645.

2. II Corinthians 5:16 is not at all conclusive. "Even though we once regarded Christ from a human point of view, we regard him thus no longer." The plural verbs show that Paul may have been thinking primarily of those who had personally known Christ. See Machen, op. cit., p. 56.

"Peter and the apostles", and advised that they be left to the disposal of God.¹ Again, there is no hint in the record that Paul was present among "the council and all the senate of Israel."² But there was in Jerusalem at least one Greek-speaking synagogue for the Hellenistic residents and visitors to the city. That synagogue, called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, had members "from Cilicia and Asia",³ and it may be that Paul as a Cilician frequented this place. Some of those from this synagogue took the lead in disputing with one of the most outstanding of the preachers of the new sect. It may have been at this Synagogue of the Freedmen that Paul had his first contact with Christianity, and if so, that first contact was with a man "of grace and power" named Stephen.

The author of Acts accuses some of the men from this synagogue of secretly conspiring against Stephen and of bringing him before the council for accusations by false witnesses. There is no indication that Paul was party to this private plot, but it is sure that he was aware of the charges brought against Stephen because it was on the basis of those charges that Paul agreed that the sentence was just.⁴ It is not known, and on the basis of available biblical evidence it cannot be known, that Paul had direct contact with Christianity previous to the time he heard the accusations against Stephen. But it is certain that immediately

1. Acts 5:33-39.

2. Acts 5:21.

3. Acts 6:9.

4. Acts 8:1.

after having heard the accusations against Stephen, Paul began what he himself called a violent and destructive persecution¹ of the Church.² Why was this so? Why did Paul strenuously exert himself to suppress the Church--in contradiction to Gamaliel's cautionary word--after hearing the charges against Stephen? What was there in Stephen's preaching which was so abhorrent to orthodox Judaism that Paul could confidently brush aside the temperate advice of his teacher and initiate the punishment of the Christians with hardly a doubt that he might be opposing God? It is in the answer to this question that the first seed of Paul's idea of freedom is to be found.

B. Stephen--Freedom's First Herald

For scores of years the religion of the temple and the religion of the people had been growing apart. The elaboration of the temple rites increased the distinction between priest and people; the scrupulous observance of minute points of the law as required by the Pharisees and Scribes made it impossible for working people to try seriously to keep it; the decentralization caused by establishing synagogues throughout the world made the people less of a "temple congregation" and more of a synagogue congregation; and the ceremonial obligations toward the temple in Jerusalem tended to be replaced by the religious obeisance toward the principles of Judaism as a sort of "portable fatherland".³

1. Galatians 1:13.

2. Acts 8:3, 9:1, I Cor. 15:9.

3. These four reasons from Macgregor and Purdy, op. cit., pp. 82, 83.

The leaders of Judaism in Jerusalem were already sensitized against the danger of further weakening of their revealed religion.

Syncretism and eclecticism caused the people to drift away from the one true religion as given by God to Moses and preserved by prophet and patriot through the centuries. Any man who taught that the law of God was to be modified or altered was to be opposed by Jews loyal to their traditions and heritage with full force of mind and heart. And should any man dare to say that the law was to be abolished and discarded, he was to be summarily executed. This final blasphemy could not be countenanced, and was to be exterminated with divine approval, if not indeed by divine command.

The Pharisees, under the moderate advice of the respected teacher Gamaliel, decided that the new sect was to be allowed to undergo the test of time—to wither if false, and to prosper if of God.¹ The new group continued to preach its brand of Judaism without persecution, and continued so for perhaps several years, although always under the surveillance of those responsible for true religion. But Stephen came to grasp a fresh significance in the teaching and life of his Master, and began fervently to promulgate it. Now for the first time the accusation by the non-Christian Hellenists that the new sect was really in opposition to the temple and the law and was not a branch of Judaism at all proves that there had arisen within Christianity itself the

1. Acts 5:33-42.

realization that there was indeed a decisive difference between the religion of Jesus and the religion of the Jews.¹ The Pharisees—who themselves could countenance a tale of a resurrection and belief in a future existence—could only regard this man's new doctrine as dangerously heretical. And Paul's detestation of Stephen's heresy mirrored the attitude of his elders on the Sanhedrin who knew the real nature of Christianity.

It has also been suggested that the division within the Church between the Hellenists and the Hebrews is inadequately explained by the ostensible cause of the trouble.² The ostensible trouble was that "the Hellenists [Jewish Christians from overseas] murmured against the Hebrews [Jewish Christians from Palestine] because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution."³ This was no doubt a cause of grievance, but it is possible that the Hebrews were resentful of Stephen's preaching, first because they were not at all convinced that he was right, and second because they were aware that his boldness might bring down the wrath of the authorities upon them all. This possibility is of the highest interest because it indicates that the fault lay with the Hebrews, for they were the ones in charge of the distribution, and they chose this oblique and unjust way of expressing their irritation because they were unable to find any firm arguments to present against Stephen's daring affirmations. The Hebrews found

1. For the germinal source of this idea see William Manson, The Epistle to the Hebrews, (London, Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1951), p. 28.

2. Ibid., pp. 27, 28.

themselves on the wrong side of the controversy, and they revealed themselves as quite capable of pettiness. That this was the real cause of the division is rendered even more credible when it is recalled that Paul was to have powerful opposition from some of these Hebrew Christians who could no more agree with him than they could with Stephen.

The Hebrew Christians, if wrong in opposing Stephen, were right in supposing that his heedlessness of caution would call down persecution upon all of them. A number of non-Christian Hellenists from the Synagogue of the Freedmen publicly declared that Stephen spoke "blasphemous words against Moses and God",¹ that he never ceased speaking "words against this holy place and the law",² and that "this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us".³ Stephen was dragged before the council and asked if this were so. The high priest, the elders, and the scribes were confident that Stephen would have to admit that the charges were substantially the truth. They had been so worded to accord with what Stephen had been publicly maintaining in the face of opposition from the Hellenists of the Synagogue of the Freedmen. Having then admitted the truth of the charges, the accused would condemn himself by his own mouth. Hence, Stephen was given full liberty to express himself before the council and the public.

1. Acts 6:11.

2. Acts 6:13.

3. Acts 6:14.

Stephen may not at first have realized the seriousness of his position. He may have thought that he was now engaged in a debate like those which he had had with his fellow Hellenists before. But he soon made his position serious, because, throwing away any attempt to convince his audience that indeed the customs of Moses were now at an end, he launched into a scorching accusation that the council like their fathers had continually fomented rebellion and murder against the prophets of God. Stephen in his defence reviewed the history of Israel from the time of Abraham and the patriarchs through Moses until the days of Solomon. It cannot be assumed that his interpretation of these past events was the ordinary construction placed upon them by the synagogue schools. Stephen declared that Israel was never a nation which proclaimed the righteous will of God to the heathen nations under the leadership of the prophets. Israel was instead a nation which resisted the Holy Spirit, persecuted and killed the prophets, betrayed and murdered the Messiah, and received the law from angels but did not keep it.¹ This view of Israelite history was designed to stagger the council into a reappraisal of their own attitude toward the meaning of God's action in history. But instead of acknowledging the accurateness of Stephen's analysis, they confirmed his thesis by adding one more murder to the long list of atrocities committed against prophets of God.

Yet even though Stephen's main purpose in his apologia is to reveal to his hearers their own desperate sin before the God they

1. Acts 7:51-53. Jesus frequently found it necessary sharply to correct the popular misconception that all Israel had consistently been godly. See especially Matthew 23:29-31 and Luke 11:47, 48.

falsely boasted of worshipping, much of the burden of Stephen's previous message may be inferred from the circumstances attending his accusation and in the manner of his handling the charges. He had evidently indeed taught that fundamental changes in "the customs which Moses delivered to us" are to be instituted. The first indication that Stephen believed this to be so is that he was evidently the leader of the divisive group within the Church. Strong circumstantial evidence indicates that he was himself a Hellenist. He had a Greek name, he spoke Greek with the disputants from the Synagogue of the Freedmen, and he was among the seven (all with Greek names) appointed to safeguard the Hellenists' interest in the matter regarding the widows. And he was evidently chief among the Hellenists because he was the first named in the list of the seven appointed, he was marked off from the others by a special commendation, he was the man the non-Christian Hellenists singled out for debate, and he was the only one they indicted. Stephen must have been the leader of the Hellenists who were opposed by the native Hebrew Christians in the matter of the distribution to the widows. And he and his group may have been thus opposed because they believed that the cultus had now been superseded in Christ. The second indication that Stephen believed this to be so is that he does not deny the charges made against him, or even pause to modify them. He accepts the essential truth of the accusations which were that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy the temple and change the customs which Moses delivered to the

Israelites.¹ The third indication that Stephen believed this to be so is that the Hellenists who had become well acquainted with his doctrines in disputes with him were willing to let him speak at length, knowing that he would support their charges by repeating his supposed blasphemies before the council. Having gone to the trouble of secretly instigating false witnesses to impute exaggerated charges against him, they would never have permitted him to open his mouth if they thought that he had a chance to refute them by appealing over their heads to the assembled public to witness that he had never in fact preached such blasphemy. The willingness of the non-Christian Hellenists to let the man have his say is a silent testimony to the respect they had for his courage, for they knew that he would never repent of his beliefs merely because he faced a hostile crowd. They were cunning enough to know this, but they were not cunning enough to foresee that the power of the Spirit dwelling within this single man was sufficient to make the judged their judge. The fourth indication is found in the wording of the charges themselves. They bear a striking resemblance to the charge made against Jesus,² which did have a basis in his actual teaching.³ The charges made against Stephen are more full than those made against Jesus, and it is reasonable to suppose that this was because he had drawn out the implications of Jesus' teaching more fully than his Lord had developed them. Therefore,

1. Acts 6:14.

2. Matthew 26:61.

3. Matthew 24:2.

circumstances attending the discourse alone are sufficient to cause the strong suspicion that Stephen had indeed been teaching that the cultus had reached its end. This suspicion is aroused even before a consideration of the content of Stephen's apologia or a study of the momentum of his school after his martyrdom.

It is possible to reconstruct more of Stephen's teaching from what he said before the council. This remains so even though it was Stephen's purpose not to make a "defense" of his teaching but rather to awaken the audience to their appalling error in murdering "the Righteous One" who had been promised by Moses. Stephen repeatedly accents the incidents in Israelite history which demonstrate that the revelation of God has never been confined to the temple. Item: Abraham had his vision of the glory of God while he was in Mesopotamia and before he entered the promised land.¹ Item: Abraham was instructed of God while he was in Haran, in the land of the Chaldeans, before he ever saw the promised land.² Item: God was with Joseph while he was in Egypt.³ Item: Moses realized while he was in Egypt that God had chosen him to deliver his brothers.⁴ Item: Moses heard the voice of the Lord while he was in Midian.⁵ Item: God performed wonders in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness.⁶ Item:

1. Acts 7:2.

2. Acts 7:4.

3. Acts 7:9.

4. Acts 7:25.

5. Acts 7:29, 30.

6. Acts 7:36.

God declared that he would remove the Israelites beyond Babylon.¹

Item: the tent was with the people in the wilderness, and it was moved with the people into the promised land.² Item: it was

David who first asked to find a habitation for the God of Jacob.³

Item: it was not until Solomon that the temple was built.⁴

Item: the prophet Isaiah declared that the temple was non-essential for true worship when he wrote:

"Heaven is my throne,
and earth my footstool.
What house will you build for me, says the Lord,
or what is the place of my rest?
Did not my hand make all these things?"⁵

And from the time of Isaiah until the time of Stephen's apologia the temple had been non-essential for the true worship of God. Stephen believed that God's action is independent of supposed holy land or holy building. And the supra-historical character of God's action is confirmed for Stephen when he proclaimed that at that moment he saw "the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God".⁶ That sentence was too much for his hearers. They thrust Stephen out of the city, through the gate, and down into the Kidron Valley, where they stoned him to death. And "the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul."⁷

1. Acts 7:43.

2. Acts 7:44, 45.

3. Acts 7:46.

4. Acts 7:47.

5. Acts 7:49, 50.

6. Acts 7:56.

7. Acts 7:58.

Stephen's apologia attacked the point of Judaism which the Jews were best prepared to defend: namely, that human formulations about God were as permanent as God himself. He declared that they had misconstrued God's true purpose, and based his contention on a double authority--the Bible (a recognized source) and Jesus (who, standing on the right hand of God, had equal authority with God). And he challenged their theology on a point which was central to the entire system: namely, that the temple was an institution permanently established by divine revelation. Therefore:

"The Pharisees could not tolerate the belief that the Law, which they had made the centre of their whole existence, was merely a temporary and local set of rules, which was shortly to be abolished; while the Sadducees were equally unable to view with equanimity the doctrine that the Temple, on which the whole political existence of the nation and their own position depended, was not a necessary part of the worship of the one true God. The whole Sanhedrin was bound to unite to put down the new teaching."¹

Therefore they slew him as an accursed heretic.

Stephen's criticism of Judaism hints at a number of startling innovations. Because God is a spiritual God who does not dwell in the temple, it follows that the Gentiles have equal opportunity with the Jews for access to God. It means that God's purpose is not exclusively for Jews, but that it is extended to all mankind. But most staggering of all for the Jews, it means that the entire system of legalistic religion is ended. Stephen may not have seen that all these things would flow logically from his central affirmation. But Paul, having been converted to the idea the the law was ended, did draw out these implications. Stephen's life, full though

1. Knox, op. cit., (Church of Jerusalem), p. 41.

it was of brilliant promise, was cut off before he had worked out the full ramifications of this revolutionary conviction. And the brief oration recorded in Acts seven, all that remains of the martyr's contribution to Christian thought, though it fails to elaborate the details, throbs with the excitement and the fervor of initial discovery. With his death died the courage of face to face opposition to the Judaizers.

That the charges the Jews had carried against Stephen had been approximately the truth is reinforced by the behavior of Stephen's chief disciple¹ Philip. Philip preached the gospel to the Samaritans, and the Samaritans were Israelites with a large admixture of Gentile blood. These Samaritans accepted the Christian message by "multitudes",² and there is no mention of their being required to transfer their place of worship from their temple on Gerizim to the temple in Jerusalem. This is in accordance with Stephen's teaching, for there was no question for him of any necessity to give allegiance to the temple.

o/ "None the less the work of Philip and its recognition by the Twelve had committed the Church to the recognition of the fact that the whole system of the worship of the Temple, hitherto accepted without question by the followers of Jesus, was not a necessary part of the divine revelation. If the Samaritan could be a member of the new society without observing the worship of the Temple, it must be possible for others to be admitted on the same terms. This could only mean that the central point of Judaism was recognized as being no longer an essential part of the true religion."³

1. Acta 6:5. Philip is the first named after Stephen.
2. Acts 8:6.
3. Knox, op. cit., (Church of Jerusalem), p. 70.

Philip also preached the same message to the Ethiopian stranger, who was not a Jew at all, but only an adherent. These two steps--the preaching of the gospel to half-Jews and to proselytes of Judaism--demonstrate that the school of Stephen is beginning to act on the principle that Christians are free from the law.

It is also suggested that the anonymous letter to the Hebrews was written by a Christian who belonged to the school of Stephen.¹ The epistle to the Hebrews abundantly reinforces the idea that Jesus is superior to the law of Moses, and that therefore its effectiveness has been superseded. The letter to the Hebrews is understood best when it is observed that its purpose is to confirm to Jewish Christians that the law has indeed come to an end. This epistle was more pertinent and more meaningful than any of Paul's letters were for that part of the early Christian community which was composed of Jewish Christians loyal to Judaism (some of whom were still priests at the temple²). The author declares that Jesus has greater authority than the angels who ministered the law,³ that he has greater authority than Moses the law-giver,⁴ and that he has greater authority than the Levitical priests who were the guardians of the law.⁵ Moreover, Jesus serves in a greater temple than the temple of Jerusalem.⁶ The point of the letter is expressed when the author explains that Jesus has accomplished the purpose of

1. Manson, op. cit., p. 36. 2. Acts 6:7.

3. Hebrews 1:1-14.

4. Hebrews 3:1-6.

5. Hebrews 7:1-28.

6. Hebrews 8:1-22.

the law,¹ and his thesis may be summarized by this quotation: "For by a single offering [Jesus] has perfected for all time those who are consecrated."² The letter to the Hebrews, which had its origin in the teaching of Stephen, works out in great detail and with expert ingenuity reasons why Christians can declare that the law has been abolished and yet remain within the Old Testament tradition. But it goes no further. As in Stephen's apologia, it leaves room for the abolition of national, religious, and ceremonial beliefs, but it does not propound them. Its paraenesis is never to freedom, but always to obedience. This is an indication that Stephen himself had never developed his ideas beyond the simple statement that the law had come to its end in Christ. He had had the initiative to go that far, and had he been given the time (it took Paul seventeen years³), he might have worked out the corollaries. The Jews put an end to Stephen's zeal. Yet it may have been his zealous followers who founded the Church among the Greek-speaking Jewish colonies in the three greatest cities of the world: Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch. But his colleagues did not have the drive to carry through the brilliant discovery of its martyred leader, as illustrated by the restricted scope of the epistle to the Hebrews, and had not Paul been standing by when Stephen was murdered, who knows how or when the history-changing concept of freedom in Christ would have come into being?

1. Hebrews 9:23-10:18.
2. Hebrews 10:14.
3. Galatians 1:18, 2:1.

Stephen, then, chosen by the Apostles to be the chief of the seven and the first leader of the Church outside of the Apostolic circle, a remarkably spiritual man capable of working "great wonders and signs",¹ and the first missionary to the non-Christian Hellenists, is also the first man to perceive that the law of Moses is swept away by the liberation which is found in Christ. His sudden and unexpected death means that the embryonic Church is still unborn in the womb of the mother synagogue. Christianity remains a sect of Judaism, and will be so for many years. This hiatus in the history of freedom between the death of Stephen and the conversion of Paul is one of the most suspenseful moments in the story of Christianity.

C. Paul--Stephen's Latent Disciple

Throughout this moment the great potential of freedom continues to exist, but only as a germinal concept in the mind of Paul, and as a germinal concept which he consciously rejects. But the impression made upon him by Christianity's proto-martyr is so deep that it is impossible for him to eradicate the idea from his mind. Why was Paul unable to forget Stephen? 1. Paul was impressed by Stephen because their meeting was his first encounter with Christianity. And this first contact represented to him the iconoclasm of the entire sect. Paul's first impression of Christianity was its seemingly anti-Jewish bias. This impression came most strongly because Stephen's speech had the effect of marking him as one thoroughly familiar with the history of Judaism, and one who was

1. Acts 6:8.

consciously aware that in his new faith he was deliberately rejecting Jewish orthodoxy. It was impossible for Paul to mistake him as one of those Hellenistic liberals who were with justification accused of laxity toward the law. As such, Paul might have been able to lay Stephen's revolutionary teaching to a faulty education, or to so scanty an appreciation of true religion that he was not really cognizant of the import of his words. However, Stephen was demonstrably no fool, but one who was openly opposed to the law itself, and not one who was trying to modify the law to fit the needs of the Jews of the diaspora. Paul clearly saw what Stephen was driving at and reacted against it with violence. 2. Paul saw Stephen under the fearful circumstances of a stoning, a brutal and a bloody way of executing a man. This alone would have made Stephen unforgettable for Paul. Stoning was not a common occurrence because Palestine was under the suzerainty of the Romans, and permission to execute had to be obtained from them. And their method of execution was crucifixion. Stephen's death was more illegal than Jesus', for the Jews in this case deprived Pilate, the Roman Procurator, of his power to give or withhold the death sentence. Stoning was the method of execution for supposed crimes against the Jewish religion, and no one before Stephen had suffered death because of his Christianity. So it follows that Paul may never have witnessed a stoning before he saw Stephen die. The ugly impression of the man dying by stoning never left Paul not only because of its frightful nature, but because it may have been the first he ever witnessed. 3. Paul must have been intrigued by the interpretation of Scripture which

Stephen set forth. Paul was an expert in the knowledge of Scripture, yet Stephen's viewpoint was novel to him. Stephen had suggested that the true interpretation of the Scripture was based upon successive revelations which came through prophets of God, and that man's conception of God's word was not as permanent as God's word itself. This ran contrary to the rabbinic way of thinking, and was the reason why Paul consented to his death. Yet might there not be the possibility that this view is allowed by the Scripture itself? In Paul's first recorded speech after his conversion, the one given in Antioch of Pisidia, the tremendous influence of Stephen's speech is still evident.¹ This speech² follows Stephen's procedure of a historical summary leading up to the point. And Paul's point is the same as Stephen's, and even more clearly stated: "Let it be known to you therefore, brethren, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him every one that believes is freed (δικαίωσιν) from everything from which you could not be freed (δικαίωσιν) by the law of Moses."³ The momentary glimmer of the possibility of the law's finish was

1. Thackeray, op. cit., pp. 8, 9.

2. Acts 13:16-41.

3. Acts 13:38, 39. The translators of the Revised Standard Version rightly understand that Paul is here groping for the idea of freedom, and so they translated what properly should be "justified" as "freed". Paul's choice of dikaioo instead of eleutheroo shows that he is still within the context of his Hebrew heritage, and has not yet reached the point where he realizes that the end of the law means not only justification in relation to the law but freedom from it. Like the author of the letter to the Hebrews, Paul is still more preoccupied with the law than with a possibility which reaches beyond the law.

caught up by Paul's active mind, and it hounded him until he yielded his life to Christ. God rested the future of freedom in Christ upon the strength of this eruptive force of doubt in the mind of one man. 4. Finally, Paul was struck by the manner in which Stephen faced death. He saw a man of inferior faith die a superior death. It is inconceivable that no light from the courage and character and the triumphant joy of the dying man penetrated the darkness of Paul's hate, and failed to illuminate his soul with even a flicker of divine radiance. Stephen faced death with more confidence than Paul himself might have been able to muster, and this triumphant faith could only have moved Paul to wonder.

The enemies of the young Church believed that they had buried Stephen's message with his body. But because Christ was alive and would die no more, so Christianity was alive and would die no more. Stephen's faith was to be resurrected in the body of an onlooker who was not a follower of Christ, nor even a non-committal bystander, but in one who willingly consented to his death and actively persecuted his fellow-believers. The ministry of Stephen, Christ's first martyr, may be thus comprehended:

"'Make way for freedom!" he cried;
made way for freedom, and died."

D. Paul is Called to Freedom

Stephen's brief apologia, delivered without any realization of its edifying effect on his listeners, seared Paul's conscience for life. As a Pharisee, Paul already believed in resurrection, and the claim of the dying man rang unceasingly in Paul's ears:

"Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God".¹ And another theme hammered Paul's conscience. He constantly exerted his utmost will to meet the innermost requirements of the law, and failed.² He was deeply troubled by the persistent sense of sin. If the law was unable to deliver man from sin, did God have no other means of deliverance? Is there no possibility at all that the law is not God's ultimate word? Is there no possibility that the Spirit of God is alive now as before? To stifle these heretical and blasphemous thoughts, Paul feverously attempted to impose the law upon others to prove to himself his own loyalty to it. His doubts about Judaism were a major reason for his unremitting persecution of the Christians. The possibility that Stephen was right gnawed at his mind—what if he was resisting the Holy Spirit, as Stephen had charged?³ What if he was "opposing God", as Gamaliel had warned?⁴ This possibility he vainly tried to crowd from his mind with anti-Christian activity. But his misery forced it to his consciousness. The essential parts of Paul's gospel were with him even before his capitulation to Christ. His conversion was effected not only by pressure from without but by pressure from within. It is a mistake to think that God overrode Paul's personality with one overwhelming, irresistible revelation, not only changing his life but creating a new being. Paul had wanted to believe, but could not. But then he met the risen Christ in a vision too vivid to disbelieve. When he

1. Acts 7:56.

2. Romans 7:7-25.

3. Acts 7:51.

4. Acts 5:39.

confessed, "Thou, Lord",¹ the ingrained prejudices of a lifetime gave way. God in Christ had now graciously made it possible for him to believe. Not until he saw the same risen Christ that Stephen saw could he know that God had approved Christ's message. Only then did he know that his God was willing to give as well as to require, and had given all that he had required.

Paul frequently recounted the story of his conversion. Christianity was not something the vision of Christ had forced upon him against his will. It was on the contrary the story of how his long sought release from bondage occurred. There are three accounts, one told by Luke,² and two in Paul's own words as recorded by Luke, one before the temple mob in Jerusalem,³ and one before King Agrippa in Caesarea.⁴ The common denominator and the meaning of all these accounts, which vary in emphasis and differ in nonessentials, is that Paul now saw with his own eyes the same that Stephen had seen, and was thereby enabled to believe with a clear conscience. The vision of the heavenly person, whom Paul immediately identified as "Lord", confirmed to him that the troubled conscience which had tormented him was of God and not of the devil. He found it possible to believe, and joyfully he did believe. That God had given him this grace was always to Paul a profound mystery for which he was deeply grateful. And his gratitude deepened with time. In A. D. 55 or 56 he wrote,

"For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle,

1. Acts 9:5.

2. Acts 9:3-9.

3. Acts 22:6-16.

4. Acts 26:12-18.

because I persecuted the church of God."¹ In about A. D. 61 he wrote, "To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given . . ."² And in a letter compiled after his death out of his sayings and letters, he is credited with having said, "And I am the foremost of sinners; but I received mercy . . ."³

Paul's conception of what freedom should be is Hebraic: freedom in its highest sense is the freedom which is found in God. But the Hebrews never brought this idea to conscious expression. The heritage of Greece, on the other hand, gave the world an expression for freedom. But its freedom signified self-government, both in the political and in the individual areas of life, and lacked any idea of a larger freedom which could be found in God. Freedom in God, expressed as such, is a Christian idea, and the potency of this idea first impinged upon Paul as he watched Stephen die. The vision of Christ made it possible for Paul to believe as Stephen did, and by that conversion Paul was freed from the law which Stephen had declared was ended. Stephen supplied the initial impetus which Paul was to carry forward and develop, especially in his letters to the Galatians and to the Romans. The vision of the ascended Christ confirmed to Paul the insight he had gained from Stephen: he too was now "called to freedom".⁴

1. I Corinthians 15:9.

2. Ephesians 3:8.

3. I Timothy 1:15.

4. Galatians 5:13.

Part Two: The Struggle for the Freedom of the Early Church

I. Jesus against Judaism: Paul's Author of Liberty

Five times when Paul mentions freedom he mentions Christ in the same breath.¹ Christ was the origin and the source of true freedom. "Freedom" was "in Christ".² Paul was converted through Stephen, but for Christ; he was converted by Stephen, but to Jesus. Yet even though Paul like Stephen declared that the law had come to its end in Christ, there were some who declared that such freedom was neither the aim nor the result of Jesus' purpose. These Christian traditionalists, the "Judaizers", maintained that Jesus himself by example and by teaching remained within the law, and that the faith of Paul was an alien accretion extraneous to historic Christianity. Paul, they maintained, was diverting the original intention of Jesus, and erecting a religion which was contrary to all that God had revealed in the past history of Israel. Paul and the other Hellenists of his party, like Joseph Barnabas the Cypriot,³ were striking far-reaching themes which Jesus had never emphasized had he countenanced them at all. It seemed to them that Paul was reacting too strongly against Judaism, that he was trying to break with the accepted canon of Scripture, that he was preaching a new religion. They tried to oppose Paul, not only in the name of Moses, but in the name of Jesus as well.

1. See page 149.

2. Galatians 2:4.

3. Acts 4:36.

A. Jesus Observed the Mosaic Law

The Judaizers, some of whom had probably known Jesus before his ^{ci}crifixion, could appeal to Jesus' personal observance of the law. He was baptized in order to fulfill all righteousness,¹ he was zealous for the purity of the temple,² he paid the temple tax,³ and he used the law in his own battle against temptation.⁴ He advised the rich young ruler to keep the commandments.⁵ He taught the law, and if anything, made its observance more stringent. For instance, he strengthened the Mosaic prohibitions and restrictions in regard to murder,⁶ adultery,⁷ and divorce.⁸ Jesus advised the people to practice and observe whatever is done on the authority of Moses.⁹ He instructed the leper he had cleansed to go to the priest and offer the gift that Moses had commanded.¹⁰ He declared that the law had been given by God,¹¹ and disavowed any intention to abolish the law and the prophets.¹² He declared that the law would never pass away until it was fulfilled,¹³ and that it was

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|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Matthew 3:15. | 2. John 2:13-17. |
| 3. Matthew 17:24-27. | 4. Mt. 4:4, 6, 10, Lk. 4:4, 7, 12. |
| 5. Matthew 19:17, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20. | |
| 6. Matthew 5:21-26. | 7. Matthew 5:27-30. |
| 8. Matthew 5:31, 32. | 9. Matthew 23:2, 3. |
| 10. Matthew 8:4, Mark 1:44, Luke 5:14. | |
| 11. Mt. 15:4, Mk. 7:13. | 12. Matthew 5:17. |
| 13. Matthew 5:18. | |

not to be relaxed in the slightest commandment.¹ He declared that the law was not to be neglected even in the matter of tithing mint and dill and cummin.² Jesus observed even the purely ritualistic legal interpretations, for it was his disciples, and not he himself, who plucked the ears of grain in the field on the sabbath, and broke the prohibition against work on the day of rest.³ Jesus' whole message seemed to be directed toward obedience of the law. And wherever Jesus challenged the Pharisaic interpretation of the law, it was in order that the intent of the law might be better obeyed. As Jesus repeatedly said, it was his primary task to obey.⁴

Jesus also seemed to have absorbed the distinctively Jewish prejudices against the uncircumcised. He classed the Gentiles with the tax collectors, those traitorous Jews who extorted money from their countrymen for the Roman oppressors.⁵ By inference, he called the non-Israelite Canaanites "dogs".⁶ And he forbade his twelve disciples to visit either the Gentiles or the Samaritans, but commanded them to preach only to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel."⁷ So it was not without apparent authority that the Judaizers could claim that Paul was far exceeding the proper limits of a Christian attitude toward the law. And these points probably contributed to the "no small dissension and debate"⁸ which the strict Christian Jews had with Paul at Jerusalem.

1. Matthew 5:19.

2. Matthew 23:23.

3. Matthew 12:1, 2, Mark 2:23, 24, Luke 6:1.

4. John 4:34, 5:30, 6:38, Matthew 26:39, etc.

5. Matthew 18:17.

6. Mt. 15:26, Mark 7:27.

7. Matthew 10:5, 6.

8. Acts 15:2.

B. Jesus Intended to End the Law

But there is better evidence to show not only that the idea of the end of the law can be fitted into the framework of Jesus' teaching, but that the end of the law had been his purpose and intention. Jesus talked about freedom on at least two different occasions and in two different contexts.¹ To the believing Jews in Jerusalem, Jesus said, "If you continue in my word, you are my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free (ἐλευθερώω)".² "Truly, truly, I say to you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not continue in the house forever; the son continues forever. So if the Son makes you free (ἐλευθερώω), you will be free (ἐλεύθερος) indeed."³ The Jews to whom Jesus was speaking in the second instance may have been political Zealots, for they thought that Jesus was implying that they were not politically free. He was trying to explain to them that spiritually they were not free. And the other place where Jesus speaks of freedom is when he told Peter that they were to pay the temple tax, even though "the sons are free (ἐλεύθερος)",⁴ i. e., that he was not obligated to pay that tax, but paid it because he did not wish to cause offense. In these two contexts, Jesus speaks of freedom from sin and freedom from religious regulation. It is in these two contexts that his attitude toward the law becomes clear. In his discussion with the politically-minded Jews, Jesus says that

May not this have to be regarded as synonymous in his presentation of Jesus?

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1. Luke 4:18 has to do with "release" and not "freedom".
 2. John 8:32.
 3. John 8:34-36.
 4. Matthew 17:26.

"truth" frees. Jesus later told his disciples, "I am the . . . truth".¹ And to the same men he intimates that he is not a slave to sin, but a Son who continues in his Father's house forever. It is the Son who makes people "free indeed". Jesus thereby twice designates himself as Christus liberator. In the other instance, Jesus tells Peter that he obeys the temple regulation not because he is obligated to do so, but because he condescends to do so. This is a positive indication that Jesus taught that the law was at an end when its jurisdiction was extended to cover him.

Jesus taught his disciples about his Sonship to God in part by his attitude toward the law. While it is true that he never changed the essential meaning of the law, he did not hesitate to declare what the real intent of the law was. In adopting this attitude, he demonstrated his superiority to the law. He would say, "You have heard that it was said to the men of old . . . but I say to you . . ."² And also in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus not only strengthened the true purpose of the law but passed beyond it. He declared on his own authority that not only false swearing but all swearing was now abolished;³ that not only just retribution but all retribution was now abolished;⁴ that not only hatred of friends but all hatred was now abolished.⁵ On another occasion

1. John 14:6.

2. Matthew 5:21, 22; 5:27, 28; 5:31, 32; 5:33, 34; 5:38, 39; 5:43, 44.

3. Matthew 5:33-37.

4. Matthew 5:38-42.

5. Matthew 5:43-48.

he told the Pharisees that he was greater than the temple¹ and Lord of the sabbath.² Jesus declared that the temple, which the Jews regarded as the symbol of the law, was doomed to certain destruction.³ Jesus openly opposed the "vexatious minutiae" of Jewish legalism.⁴ But his authoritative instruction concerning the law itself demonstrated his lordship over the essential as well as the accidental. This was sensed by his enemies, and was a main charge against him at his trial.⁵

It must also be noted that even though Jesus rebuked the Canaanite woman, he did grant her request;⁶ and though he forbade his disciples to go to the Gentiles, at the last he commanded them to go into all the world;⁷ and though he forbade his disciples to go to the Samaritans, he made a half-caste representative of "the foolish people that live in Shechem"⁸ the exemplar of goodness in his most famous parable.⁹ Jesus also commended the faith of the centurion in Capernaum, saying that it surpassed anything he had seen in Israel.¹⁰ The text of the "Great Commission", mentioned above, has been suspected on the a priori grounds that its "incipient trinitarianism" and the command to world-wide mission

1. Matthew 12:6.

2. Matthew 12:8.

3. Matthew 24:2, Mark 13:2, Luke 21:6.

4. Matthew 15:20, Mark 7:2; Mark 2:27.

5. Mt. 26:61, Mk. 14:58.

6. Mt. 15:28, Mk. 7:29.

7. Matthew 28:19, 20.

8. Wisdom of Sirach 50:26.

9. Luke 15:11-24.

was a development of the later Church, supposedly interpolated by a later writer to justify the expansion of Christianity. There is, however, no textual evidence to support this theory. The reference to the Trinity is not without foreshadowing in other things which Jesus said. And the command to evangelize the world is in harmony with Jesus' intention to establish the Church. A study relating to this latter point has been made¹ which seeks to demonstrate that Jesus had a greater purpose in mind than just confronting "men with the specific challenge to achieve an ethical character motivated by love in all their social relations."² Jesus intended to establish a new order, a distinct fellowship, a spiritual community in place of the old legal religion. "By direct saying, by parable, through challenging men to an expression of faith in himself, by means of the strange acted parable of the 'twelve', and through the establishment of the 'fellowship meal', Jesus made it evident to his intimate disciples that he desired to form a group who should live the Kingdom life in the closest fellowship with himself as its Mediator."³ The Great Commission⁴ is another argument for that study's thesis because it fits into the overall scheme of Jesus' intention. It is quite arbitrary to dismiss the text from the page because of a priori presuppositions which overlook these significant contrary considerations.

Moreover, it is to be noted that it was Paul alone who saw the importance of the words which Jesus spoke during the institution

1. John Wick Bowman, The Intention of Jesus, (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1943), especially pp. 189-228.

2. Ibid., p. 193.

3. Ibid., p. 224.

4. Matthew 28:19, 20, not discussed by Bowman.

of the Lord's Supper: "Do this in remembrance of me."¹ Although the account of the last supper is told by the three synoptics,² it is Paul alone whose account retains these words.³ And Paul notes that Jesus twice repeats the phrase. He sees in this an essential part of the signification of the Lord's supper: the initiation of a fellowship which grew out of Christ and not out of Judaism.

If freedom from the law was latent in Jesus' mission, how is it that Paul's theologizing about it is not superfluous? For three reasons. 1. The stricter Jewish Christians, allowing themselves to be guided by a God only of the past and not of the present, refused to admit the possibility of a revelation which did not fit their preconceived notions of what that revelation should reveal. Their obstinate contradiction of universalism required a positive answer. 2. Jesus expressly directed his ministry to the Jews, and he required his disciples to go to them too. The few examples of intercourse with the Gentiles are pointed out to be exceptions. The matter of freedom became an issue only when Christianity was expanded beyond the borders of Palestine, and began to attract non-Jews as well as Jews. The new circumstances required the elucidation of implications latent in Jesus' ministry. 3. Jesus did not merely teach freedom, he brought it. The understanding of freedom in Christ could not fully be realized until the sacrificial atonement was accomplished by Christ in his

1. I Corinthians 11:24 and again in 11:25.

2. Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, Luke 22:17-19.

3. Many ancient authorities include the phrase as a part of Luke's account (22:19, 20), but the best manuscripts omit it.

death and resurrection. Only then was the depth of the love of God revealed; only then could his followers know that their sins had been paid for; only then could they know that they had been freed. Jesus offered freedom in his discourses, but he gave freedom by his death. The word which describes Paul's theology is not superfluity or redundancy but totality or completeness. A comprehensive Christian theology was possible only after Jesus had fully accomplished his purpose. As the translators of the King James Version put it, "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive".¹ And it was not until then that the meaning of freedom became known.

It is incredible ~~(to believe)~~ that the Apostle attempted to foist Paulinism upon the Gentiles in place of Christianity. It is impossible to accept any hypothesis which suggests that the Apostle who humbled himself was trying to displace the Christ whom he magnified. It is most improbable to think that Paul knowingly and perversely replaced the reputedly simple message of Jesus with a new religion of the transcendent, eternal, mystical, and universal Christ. Paul was not a critic of Christ but an apostle; the critics left no Christians after them. Whatever Paul taught about Christ, he taught with the conviction that he was teaching what Christ taught. "For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord."² The Apostle would not have preached

1. Ephesians 4:8. Neither the Psalmist nor the Apostle ever said these words, but nonetheless the King James translators did not do violence to Paul's trend of thought. The Revised Standard Version reads, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives."

2. II Cor. 4:5, cf. I Cor. 1:23, Phil. 1:18, Col. 1:28, etc.

freedom from the law unless he had been convinced that this conclusion followed directly out of Jesus' message. But is there any possibility that Paul had mistaken Jesus' message? Paul certainly was sincere, but could he have been sincerely wrong? There is no reason to suppose that Paul had ever talked with Jesus or even seen him in the days of his flesh. It was perhaps because he could have that he rued his late conversion to Jesus. Is it possible that the Apostle "untimely born"¹ had misconstrued the purpose of Jesus through ignorance of his earthly ministry?

C. Paul was Informed on the Facts of Jesus' Life

Paul had written most of his letters and perhaps all of them before any of the four gospels as they now exist were composed. Yet is unlikely that he was not acquainted with the life of Jesus as well if not better than present day readers. He had ample opportunities to learn the facts and the teachings of Jesus' life. He had learned some things about Jesus even before his conversion from the Christians he had persecuted. Immediately after his conversion he was instructed in the faith by Ananias,² and thereafter "for several days he was with the disciples at Damascus."³ Some years later he spent fifteen days with Peter in Jerusalem.⁴ On the occasion of this visit, Paul was also introduced to another of the apostles, James, the Lord's brother.⁵ Paul was introduced to the Jerusalem Christians by Joseph Barnabas,⁶ who was an

1. I Corinthians 15:8.

2. Acts 9:17, 18.

3. Acts 9:19.

4. Galatians 1:18.

5. Galatians 1:19.

6. Acts 9:27.

early member of the Church,¹ and became a companion of Paul on the first missionary journey. Paul was accompanied on that first journey also by John Mark, who likewise came from the Jerusalem Church.² Tradition says that it was John Mark who compiled the account of Jesus' life as it is in the Gospel of Mark. Paul was accompanied on the second and third journeys by his friend and physician Luke, as the "we passages" of Acts indicate. Luke was the author of the Gospel named after him. Paul was well acquainted with Silvanus (Silas, as Luke calls him), a distinguished member of the Jerusalem Church. Silvanus traveled with Paul on the second journey, and lived with him in Corinth.³ Paul also frequently met men and women who had become Christians through others, such as Priscilla and Aquila, and no doubt learned more of Jesus through them.

It is not surprising that Paul displays a wide knowledge of the facts of Jesus' ministry in the epistles. Paul's knowledge of the man is much more extensive than many have supposed.⁴ Paul knew that Jesus was a man,⁵ a Jew,⁶ born under the law,⁷ descended from Abraham,⁸ and David,⁹ had brothers,¹⁰ one of whom was named James,¹¹

1. Acts 4:36, 37.

2. Acts 12:1-17.

3. II Corinthians 1:19.

4. This is the main idea in the thesis by Carroll Andrew Wood, St. Paul's Conception of the Humanity of Jesus Christ, A thesis presented to the Faculty of Divinity, the University of Edinburgh, in partial fulfillment for the degree Doctor of Philosophy, (Edinburgh, May, 1954).

5. Rom. 5:15, I Cor. 15:21. 6. Romans 9:5. 7. Gal. 4:4.

8. Gal. 3:16. 9. Rom. 1:3. 10. I Cor. 9:5. 11. Gal. 1:19.

ministered among the Jews,¹ and had twelve disciples.² Paul characterized Jesus as meek and lowly,³ obedient,⁴ full of grace.⁵ Paul knew enough about Jesus to imitate him.⁶ Jesus was betrayed,⁷ sacrificed,⁸ and died by crucifixion.⁹ He was buried, raised from the dead on the third day, and appeared to witnesses.¹⁰ Paul claims to write the command of the Lord,¹¹ and twice he quotes the sense of specific commands from Jesus.¹² He is aware of Jesus' teaching on marriage in such detail that he knows of lacunae in his Lord's instruction.¹³ And in the two instances where Paul quotes the ipsissima verba of Jesus, he preserves sayings which otherwise would have been lost.¹⁴ There are, in fact, more than a thousand places in Paul's letters which reflect the account of Jesus' life according to the four gospels.¹⁵ There is no suggestion that Paul wrote down everything that he knew about Jesus. He mentioned Jesus only when occasion made a reference applicable. And nothing he says contradicts the gospel accounts. Paul, for instance, makes no mention of the birth of Christ of a

1. Romans 15:8.

2. I Corinthians 15:5.

3. II Corinthians 10:1.

4. Romans 5:19.

5. II Corinthians 8:9.

6. I Corinthians 11:1.

7. I Corinthians 11:23.

8. I Corinthians 5:7.

9. I Cor. 2:8, Gal. 3:13.

10. I Corinthians 15:3-8.

11. I Corinthians 14:37.

12. I Corinthians 7:10, 9:14.

13. I Cor. 7:12, 25.

14. I Cor. 11:23-26, Acts 20:35.

15. James S. Stewart, course on The Originality of Paul, New College, Edinburgh, October 14, 1954.

virgin, but what he does say when he brushes that subject allows one to think not only that he knew of the doctrine but accepted it.¹ "The presumption is, therefore, that Paul was a true disciple of Jesus. He regarded himself as a disciple; he was so regarded by his contemporaries; he made use of Jesus' teaching and example."² There is much more reason for believing that Paul's understanding of Jesus' purpose was accurate than there is for believing that the Judaizers' understanding was accurate. Paul's interpretations were so highly regarded by the early Church that they were preserved, while the Judaizers' interpretations survive only as the counterfoil to dynamic, evangelizing Christianity. Paul accurately reflected the teaching and spirit of Christ in proclaiming freedom from law. Neither the word nor the thought is an innovation which contradicts Jesus. Paul's development of the idea is well within the framework erected by Christ in his life and teaching.

Is there a possibility that Paul derived his use of the word "free" from Jesus? Extant records do not indicate that Jesus ever used the substantival form of the verb "to free". And he used the verbal and adjectival forms in only two contexts. The one had to do with exemption from taxation, and the other had a spiritual signification. And in the latter instance, Jesus connected it with truth. If any of the New Testament writers make use of the doublet of freedom and truth it would be a possible indication that they

1. See John Gresham Machen, The Virgin Birth of Christ, (Second Edition; New York, Harper and Brothers, 1932).

2. Machen, op. cit., (The Origin of Paul's Religion), p. 153. See especially Chapter IV, "Paul and Jesus", pp. 117-172.

derived the concept from Jesus. It has been suggested, for instance, that the frequent repetition of the triad "faith, hope, and love" by Paul¹ and other New Testament writers² points to a common origin in early Christian paradosis or to an unwritten saying of Christ.³ But the coupling of freedom and truth is found nowhere else in the New Testament. In the middle of the discussion about truth and freedom, Jesus says, "every one who commits sin is a slave to sin".⁴ Paul has a sentence parallel to this: "Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, whether of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?"⁵ In context with this sentence, Paul also speaks of freedom. But nowhere is the parallel between Jesus and Paul in the matter of freedom strong enough to suggest a direct relation.

Paul's dependence upon Christ is more than his knowledge of his Lord's terrestrial history indicates. It was not because of the facts of Jesus' life that Paul derived an understanding of freedom; it was because of their meaning. The meaning of what had happened in his conversion Paul derived from no man. "I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ."⁶ It was the meaning of the facts which distinguished the Hellenists from the Hebrews rather than the facts themselves. The problem was more than the matter of ascertaining

1. Rom. 5:1-5, I Cor. 13:13, Gal. 5:5, 6, Eph. 4:2-5, Col. 1:45.

2. I Thes. 1:3, 5:8, Heb. 6:1-12, 10:22-24, I Pet. 1:3-8, 1:21-22.

3. Archibald Macbride Hunter, Paul and His Predecessors, (London, Nicholson and Watson, 1940), pp. 37-40.

4. John 8:34. 5. Rom. 6:16. Cf. II Pet. 2:19. 6. Gal. 1:11.

Jesus' intention, it was the matter of evaluating his person. The problem was Christological. Was the Christian group to be absorbed by Judaism, or was the Jewish religion to be comprehended by Christ? The answer to this question hinges upon the estimation of Christ. Paul believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. Therefore Paul says, "even though we once regarded Christ from a human point of view, we regard him thus no longer".¹ The conception of Christus Liberator came by revelation. In Paul's words, "all this is from God . . . that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation."² Consequently, Paul establishes a dual validity for his idea of freedom in Christ: it was intended by the Jesus of history and revealed by God directly. And it was the latter argument which carried the day at the Council of Jerusalem.

II. Temple against Church: Paul's Struggle for Gentile Freedom

A. Christianity is Distinct from Judaism

Paul, a true apostle of Jesus Christ, met vigorous opposition from others, professedly followers of Christ, whom he calls "these superlative apostles."³ Their opposition had arisen over a matter which had not been a problem during the lifetime of Jesus--must the law be enforced upon those Gentiles who had become Christians? The central argument of Paul's opponents hinged upon just this fact, viz., that for Jesus the matter had never been a problem. Therefore they

1. II Corinthians 5:16.

2. II Corinthians 5:18, 19.

3. II Corinthians 11:5.

were able to maintain that it was not the message of Jesus but the radical construction placed upon it by Paul that caused the trouble. Jesus had never attacked the law nor advocated the suspension of the rite of circumcision. The first Christians, all of them circumcised Jews, remained within the law and continued to worship in the temple after Jesus' ascension¹ and even after Stephen's martyrdom.² The early Church simply added Jesus' teaching onto the body of legal teaching inherited from Moses and the prophets, and followed Jesus' pronouncements with the same devotion with which they followed the law. The experiment in communal living, for instance, was an attempt to follow Jesus as literally as they followed the law.³ The Church was first a part of Judaism. It was the Church itself which first realized that it was not the same as Judaism; then the Jews realized it; and last of all the Gentile governmental authorities realized it. Stephen was the Christian who first had the insight to distinguish the one from the other. Paul even as an unbelieving Jew was also quick to see that Judaism and "the Way" were distinctly separate. And Paul as a Christian was notorious to the Judaizers because of his insistence that Judaism and the Way had irreconcilable differences. Has any student of Paul pointed out that after a year of the Apostle's teaching in Antioch the citizens recognized that the Church was indeed distinct from the synagogue? "In Antioch the disciples were for the first time

1. Acts 2:42, 3:1, 5:12, 20, 42.

2. Acts 21:24, 22:17.

3. Knox, op. cit., (The Church of Jerusalem), p. 7.

called Christians."¹ Paul had made it plain to the Antiochenes that the disciples were not a sect of Judaism but a group called out to a fresh understanding and proclamation of God's word. Hence, Paul's insistence upon Gentile freedom may have resulted not only in the fact but also in the name of a new religion. A governmental official such as Gallio, Proconsul of Corinth and Achaia, never did open his eyes wide enough to distinguish between Judaism and Christianity. When the Jews charged Paul the Christian before Gallio with preaching against the law, the Proconsul dismissed as trivia "questions about words and names and your own law."² The blindness of the government toward the young Church must have galled the Jews because Christianity as a Jewish sect shared the favor granted to Judaism as a religio licita. The Jews were therefore as anxious to disinherit the Christians as the Judaizing Christians were to remain within Judaism.

B. The Judaizers Precipitate the Jerusalem Council

It was the lack of insight on the part of the Judaizers which precipitated the Jerusalem Council. There had been a trend against their point of view, but that trend was not decisive. Peter had converted the Roman army officer,³ but Cornelius was a proselyte, which means that he had already submitted to circumcision or at least would not refuse to be circumcised. It was an isolated precedent surrounded by extraordinary circumstances, and could be

1. Acts 11:26.
2. Acts 18:15.
3. Acts 10:1-48.

Cornelius was not a proselyte to Judaism, but a "God-fearer" (ποσέβωντες
for God, Act X. 2, X. 22, X. 35, X. 45, XI. 3, XI. 18).

interpreted as a special favor shown to an exceptional display of faith—something like Jesus' acquiescence to the Canaanite woman. Had the Hebrews realized that religion had entered a new dimension with the conversion of Cornelius, there would have been less difficulty between the Hellenists and the Hebrews, or between Peter and Paul at Antioch.

"Inwardly, indeed, the early Jerusalem disciples were already free from the Law; they were really trusting for their salvation not to their observance of the Law but to what Christ had done for them. But apparently they did not fully know that they were free; or rather they did not know exactly why they were free. The case of Cornelius, according to the Book of Acts, was exceptional; Cornelius had been received into the Church without being circumcised, but only by direct command of the Spirit. Similar direct and unexplained guidance was apparently to be waited for if the case was [sic] to be repeated. Even Stephen had not really advocated the immediate abolition of the Temple or the abandonment of Jewish prerogatives in the presence of Gentiles."¹

The influx of many Gentile Christians under the ministry of Paul forced the issue. The Judaizers were willing to appeal to the Apostles for a ruling on the matter for two reasons. First, the very fact that they succeeded in forcing Paul to appeal to the Apostles for the arbitration of the dispute would demonstrate to all that the authority of Jerusalem was superior to his. These "champions of circumcision"² would thereby win the case no matter what the ruling by retaining the administrative power of the Church in Jerusalem, so adding to their own prestige and nationalistic pride of race. Second, they thought that the difference in approach

1. Machen, op. cit., (Origin of Paul's Religion), p. 19.

2. Smith, op. cit., p. 14, so translates $\sigma\epsilon\kappa$
 $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\tau\omicron\mu\eta\varsigma$, Acts 11:2. Cf. Galatians 2:12.

between the apostles (who observed the temple fasts, feasts, and ceremonies) and Paul (who required no ritualism from his converts) augured well for a decision partial to their view. They knew that the apostles could be moved by arguments for true holiness and stringent righteousness.

"Now if the brethren who lived throughout the Empire entered on the path of a laxer Hellenism, if they modified the demands of the Law, opened the door too wide to the Gentiles and began the closest brotherly intercourse with the uncircumcised, then they exposed the whole Messianic movement to the suspicion of disloyalty to the Law and prejudiced their chance of winning the Jews. But above all, and here their instinct was quite correct, the Gospel would be denationalized through the Gentile mission and become a message of salvation for all men, the Messiah would turn more and more into a non-Jewish Savior and Kyrios and salvation into a purely individual matter instead of being the concern of Israel. It was important once again to emphasize strongly that the Messiah had come for Israel and that only Jews could have a share in salvation. That was the meaning of the demand for circumcision. It was not just a question of the assumption of a particular obligation of the Law, but of the necessity for the Gentiles to become Jews before they could be Christians."¹

They thought that the apostles could be influenced by arguments which exaggerated the radicalism of Paul.

"The animosity to Paul was not alone because he maintained that Gentile believers in Christ should be admitted to the church without circumcision, a point which concerned the church only, but—what was of vital interest to all Jews—because he was reported to foment apostasy from Moses by teaching all the Jews in the dispersion not to circumcise their children nor observe the customs of their religion (Acts 21:21)."²

They hoped that the apostles would be unable to break the chain of exclusiveness which characterized the religion in which they had been trained from youth.

1. J. Weiss, op. cit., (History of Primitive Christianity), p.265.

2. Moore, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 21.

"Exclusiveness, particularism, segregation--this was written into the very structure of Temple religion. Inscribed before the eyes of every Gentile seeker after God stood the daunting words: 'Whosoever passes this barrier will himself be the cause of the death which overtakes him.'"¹

They expected that the apostles would concur in recognizing that true religion had been a creation, not an evolution, a disclosure of the beyond, and not a reshaping of something which existed. God's revelation was closed and complete and irrevocable. Even the extent of the application of the law had to be interpreted with reference to past revelation. It was impossible for God to change his mind. Irresoluteness in the ordinances of God would result in the disintegration of religion. The sign of circumcision had held the Jews together for centuries; they thought that the apostles would agree that it could now hold believers together.² The transformation of God's purpose is impossible; development unlikely.

But the Judaizers were forced into calling for a Jerusalem Council. Not only had the numbers of Paul's converts swelled the

1. James S. Stewart, A Faith to Proclaim, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1953), pp. 82, 83.

2. The difficulty of Paul's position may better be understood by a modern comparison. It is as though Paul were teaching a group of hyper-conservative Christians that their impregnable Bible-confidence was hindering their comprehension of God, and trying to convince them at the same time that nonetheless the Bible is the authoritative rule of faith and practice. These people would instinctively look upon Paul with distrust, believing sincerely that the loss of an infallible Bible would result in the demise of their God and in the eventual corruption of divine truth. Paul's doctrine of freedom is relevant to this present-day conservative attitude, and he might well have said, as did Luther, that Christ is Lord also of the Scriptures. The problem of the relation of the Torah to the Gentiles, which is obscured for us by the passing of time and by the emergence of a Church which is almost entirely non-Jewish, was for the early Church as difficult and serious a matter as the problem of the authority of Scripture has been for the modern Church.

numbers of believers and threatened to outweigh by size alone the influence of Jerusalem, but the views of these new converts were antagonistic to the non-Christian Jews. Should the believers continue to insist that the law was no longer a requirement of true religion, the Jews would surely sweep down upon them all with destruction and persecution. Eventually, even the Gentile authorities would realize that Christianity was not Judaism, and then governmental persecution would also attempt to stamp them out. The Judaizers thought that it would be better to be satisfied with half a gospel than to realize its full meaning and lose everything. It was better to compromise and survive than be stubborn and die. The measure of Jewish hatred of those who reject the law is typified by this first century Jewish prayer, "For apostates may there be no hope, and may the Nazarenes and the heretics suddenly perish."¹ The Judaizers were willing to avoid this persecution at the cost of truth.

The Judaizers, moreover, had to silence the schismatic individualist Paul who was publicly attacking their motivation as base. They regarded themselves as zealots for the maintenance of God's will as it was revealed in the law, as evangelists who proclaimed that world redemption was the national concern of the Jews. But Paul could not see them in any favorable light. He would not admit that they were high-principled men, much less Christians. He regards them as troublemakers and perverters,² men-pleasers,³

1. Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 292.

2. Galatians 1:7, 5:10.

3. Galatians 1:10.

"false brethren" and spies,¹ schoolboys,² cowards,³ and hypocrites.⁴ He twice invokes the curse of God upon anybody who preaches a contrary gospel,⁵ and wishes such a one only self-mutilation.⁶ "Dogs", he calls them, and "evil-workers".⁷ The Judaizers had to put a stop to these injurious accusations.

It was the Judaizers who precipitated the Jerusalem Council, not only by their perverse opposition to the truth as it was preached by Paul, but by specific request. Paul and Barnabas "were appointed to go up to Jerusalem",⁸ although Paul insists that he went only because of "revelation".⁹ Even if a contradiction is seen between these two accounts, in either case Paul went not of his own initiative. The Council must have been sponsored by the Judaizers. As Paul confesses, he went only "lest somehow I should be running or had run in vain",¹⁰ i. e., lest all his work be undercut by the fierce propaganda emanating from the Judaizers. But Paul refused to admit that he went to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage to receive the approbation and certification of his ministry from the highest authority. He denied that he was bound to report to the apostles or be recognized by them. He had been "an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father"¹¹

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| 1. Galatians 2:4. | 2. Galatians 3:24, 25, by inference. |
| 3. Galatians 6:12. | 4. Galatians 6:13. |
| 5. Galatians 1:8, 9. | 6. Galatians 5:12. |
| 7. Philippians 3:2. | 8. Acts 15:2. |
| 9. Galatians 2:2. | 10. Galatians 2:2. |
| 11. Galatians 1:1. | |

from the beginning, and his ministry of seventeen years had been carried on without any need of apostolic verification. Why did Paul then consent to go to Jerusalem at all? He went to Jerusalem not with the hope of securing its counsel and sanction for himself, but with the purpose of sharing with them news of the extent of God's mercy to the Gentiles and proving it with living exhibitions of God's grace. There was no question of limiting his ministry should they decide against him. The authority of the Judaizers rested in the claim that they were representative of original Christianity because they had been associated with the first Christians, and perhaps with Jesus himself. By going to Jerusalem, Paul hoped to destroy this false idea of authority by proximity by securing the backing of the apostles—not for the sake of the truth, but for the sake of the Judaizers and those they misled. Paul went to Jerusalem to clarify and strengthen the faith of the apostles themselves, some of whom were hesitating because of pressure from the Judaizers. Paul went not to receive aid, but to give it. He went not to seek and learn the truth, but to demonstrate the unity of the Church. He wanted it made known that the Judaizers could not split the Church by wrongly branding him and all his converts schismatics. Paul was not willing supinely to see the Church shatter into fragments. He tried to unite the mind of the Church and hold it to the truth of God. He went to Jerusalem not because he was summoned, but because he had something to say.

C. Acts 15 and Galatians 2 Identified

There is a measure of uncertainty in identifying the post-conversion Pauline visits to Jerusalem according to Acts with those according to the Apostle's letters. Acts refers to four such visits, but Paul refers to only three. The traditional harmonization is as follows:

According to Acts	According to Paul
First visit: 9:26-29, 22:17, 18.	Galatians 1:18-20.
Second visit: 11:29, 30, 12:25.	No mention.
Third visit: 15:1-29.	Galatians 2:1-10.
Final visit: 21:15-23:30.	Romans 15:31 (in prospect).

But it is possible to identify completely Galatians 2:1-10 with the second visit according to Acts.¹ At first glance, it might seem that this is more likely because if Paul were making a point of being scrupulously accurate ("In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie", Gal. 1:20), he would not have omitted reference to a second visit had it occurred. This oath, however, more probably has to do not with his enumeration of Jerusalem visits, but with his surprising claim to have met only two of the twelve apostles throughout a fifteen day stay on his first visit to the city as a Christian. Moreover, the oath occurs right after the statement concerning his first visit, and may have no reference at all to any subsequent visit. But the strongest reason for objecting to the identification of Gal. 2:1-10 with Acts 11:29, 30

1. Machen, op. cit., (Origin of Paul's Religion), pp. 78-100.

and 12:25 is that in this case it would be necessary to conclude that this was the first of two Jerusalem Councils, and that Paul's first declaration of Gentile freedom to the apostles did not result in a common declaration strong enough to silence the Judaizers, and a second Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-29, not mentioned in the epistles) had to be called to deal with the same problem all over again. While even this is not an insuperable objection, the existing evidence shows so much more resemblance between the accounts of Gal. 2:1-10 and Acts 15:1-29 than between Gal. 2:1-10 and Acts 11:29, 30; 12:25, that the weight of scholarly opinion is for their identification.¹ And besides, if Gal. 2:1-10 is identified with Acts 11:29, 30 and 12:25, then Galatians becomes the earliest of all Paul's epistles. This means that the Apostle adopted the use of the Greek word for freedom in the period of time between his first recorded sermon (Acts 13:16-41), where he had occasion to use the word but did not, and the writing of the letter, which occurred sometime before leaving Antioch to go up to Jerusalem for the Council of Acts 15:1-29, which took place in A. D. 50. In this case it would be necessary to conclude that Paul could write his "Magna Charta of Christian liberty", complete with phrase borrowed from Greek manumission rites,² and word borrowed from the Grecian heritage, after contact with only the minor out-lying Greek colonial cities on his journeys, and between

1. Arthur S. Peake, Paul and the Jewish Christians, (Manchester, The Manchester University Press, 1929), pp. 8 ff.

2. Galatians 5:1.

two periods of time¹ when he seems to know nothing about the potential richness of the Greek contribution to religious vocabulary. It is easier to believe that Paul wrote Galatians after his years of association with the Greeks in their major cities of Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus, after acquiring intimacy with their customs of religious and imperial manumission, after finding it necessary to speak their idiom, and in those years when his doctrine of freedom is most strongly stated in his other letters. For these reasons, then, it is better to identify Galatians 2:1-10 with Acts 15:1-29 than with Acts 11:29, 30 and 12:25.

D. The Case for Gentile Freedom

The argument which Paul and Barnabas used against the Judaizers at the time of the Jerusalem Council was that of fait accompli, the fact that God himself had given the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. They rested their case on this incontrovertible evidence.² Peter concurred, using the same line of reasoning. And finally James, the younger brother of the Lord, (James the brother of John having been killed³), also agreed, although he used three citations from the prophets to establish the matter, rather than citing as evidence the living examples of Christian Gentiles. Notice that James does not acknowledge Paul's argument—the blessing of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles—but, disdaining

1. Paul's first recorded sermon, Acts 13:16-41, and the two letters to Thessalonica.

2. Acts 15:12.

3. Acts 12:2.

this pragmatic test, finds his ground for the truth to which he must yield in Scripture. He turns to the law as the ultimate court of appeal even for a ruling on its end. Even then, his reluctant agreement is hedged with restrictions. But the apostles agree that they believe in the same gospel that Paul preaches. As Stewart says,¹ Judaism is the prodigal's elder brother, who imagines that he is faultless and hates the younger for receiving forgiveness. The apostles now remind the Judaizers "that it is the Father of the family, and not the elder brother, who decides."

There was "much debate"² at the Jerusalem Council, but just what line it took is not intimated. In the epistle to the Galatians, written about five years later, Paul gives a cogent and forceful refutation of the errors of his opponents. These arguments had evolved from the contentions of the Jerusalem Council, although it is likely that they were not so fully developed then. The import of that letter is that those who confuse the gospel with law, and the Church with temple, repudiate Christ by using Moses as an excuse. If the Judaizers are right, then all of Paul's ministry is negated,³ the persecutions the Gentile Christians have suffered have been pointless,⁴ and Christ not only will advantage the Gentiles nothing,⁵ but died entirely to no purpose.⁶ These things are impossible.

1. Stewart, op. cit., (A Faith to Proclaim), p. 64.

2. Acts 15:7.

3. Galatians 2:2.

4. Galatians 3:4.

5. Galatians 5:2.

6. Galatians 2:21.

Paul's ministry was certified by Jesus Christ and God the Father,¹ and not by an angel from heaven,² as was the law,³ nor by men,⁴ though they be apostles.⁵ Moreover, the Gentiles have received the Spirit of sonship,⁶ and by it have worked miracles.⁷ And Christ has died that men who could not be justified by the law⁸ may be justified by faith.⁹ Circumcision means not only that obedience to the whole law becomes an absolute if impossible requirement, but it means the complete repudiation of Jesus Christ. And Paul does not hesitate to contrast the self-seeking of the men who are proposing this prideful false gospel¹⁰ with his own fidelity to Christ.¹¹

Paul at Jerusalem made use of another argument, also based on deed, to aid the apostles in confirming his theology. Paul used every means at his disposal to make the Church stand fast for justification by faith and the freedom of the Gentiles, and he made use of an opportunity to confirm his gospel by supplementing the material welfare of the Christians in Jerusalem. Paul's theology was not a juggling of ideas about God but a struggle for the minds of men. Not that Paul ever thought that even an adverse decision

1. Gal. 1:1, 1:12, 1:16.

2. Gal. 1:8.

3. Gal. 3:19.

4. Gal. 1:11.

5. Gal. 1:16, 17.

6. Gal. 4:6.

7. Gal. 3:5.

8. Gal. 2:16, 3:10, 11.

9. Gal. 2:16, 3:2, 9, 14, 22, 26, 5:5.

10. Especially 5:1-12. See also pp. 192, 193.

11. Gal. 1:10, 1:24, 2:9, 2:20, 4:14, 6:13 and 14 by implication, 6:17.

of the Council would impair the truth, but it would destroy the unity of the Church. So he used all weapons in the struggle. And Paul had an admirable opportunity to shame the Hebrew Christians for criticizing the Hellenists for not observing the law by supplying their dire need for material subsistence. He was able to show them with money in his hand that those saved by faith were willing and anxious to aid their Jerusalem brothers. Paul was aware of the inertia which had to be overcome. He knew that some in the Jerusalem church were apprehensive of the power of the gospel he advocated. Salvation by faith alone frightened them. Freedom in the hands of sinners! Discipline, order, guidance--must not these be imposed to preserve freedom and prevent license? Is it not injudicious for man to presume so much on the goodness of God? Emancipation from the law could lead to moral chaos. Paul's teachings were too dangerous, too daring, too revolutionary to merit unqualified support. Lest the Judaizers succeed in having the Council hedge their approval of the younger enthusiast with cautionary restrictions, Paul did not too long conceal the fact that once again the Gentile Christians wished to contribute to the needs of those of the household of faith in Jerusalem. And Paul in his letter attentively notes that James and Cephas and John had the financial power of the Gentile Christians in mind when they bade him goodbye.¹ And in an aside to the Galatians alone, Paul genially confesses, "which very thing I was eager to do."²

1. Galatians 2:10.

2. Galatians 2:10.

E. The Jerusalem Council Vindicates Gentile Freedom

The apostolic decision of the Jerusalem Council went out to the Gentiles at Antioch as follows: "For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from unchastity".¹ Paul had won his major point--circumcision is not mentioned as a requirement for belief in Christ. But yet, though the decree agrees not to trouble Gentile believers with circumcision, it does lay several restrictions on them. This seems to be an unsatisfactory compromise, because it was a cardinal Pauline principle that the acceptance of even a part of the law was tantamount to the imposition of all of it.² Yet Paul accepted the decree, even though he never directly mentions it in his letters, because he accepted "the right hand of fellowship"³ at the conclusion of the council, and because the mixed congregation at Antioch "rejoiced at the exhortation"⁴ when Paul and the others read it to them. How could Paul have accepted an injunction which apparently curtailed Gentile liberty?⁵ It has been suggested that the third

1. Acts 15:28, 29, cf. 21:25. 2. Galatians 5:3.

3. Galatians 2:9.

4. Acts 15:31.

5. Martin Luther, "On the Councils and the Churches", Works of Martin Luther, Vol. V, (Philadelphia, A. J. Holman Company, 1931), p. 150, comments, "Now if we would have a Church according to this council (as would be only right, since it is the highest and the first, and was held by the apostles themselves), we should have to teach and insist that no prince, lord, burgher, or peasant should henceforth eat geese, roe-deer, stag, or pork cooked in blood, and must also avoid carp and fish-jelly; for there is blood in them or, as the cooks say, 'color'. And especially must the

prohibition, which is omitted from the text by a few early authorities, is spurious. The remaining three injunctions then become not ceremonial but moral, forbidding only idolatry, unchastity, and blood, i. e., murder. It has alternatively been suggested that Paul accepted the injunction knowing that it was unimportant and hoping that time would wash it away; or that the text has been misplaced; or that it is entirely spurious.¹

The key to a more satisfactory solution lies in the verse which immediately follows the apostolic decision: "For from early generations Moses has had in every city those who preach him, for he is read every sabbath in the synagogues".² What does this additional sentence imply? It must have been added to clarify and to justify the immediately preceding apostolic decision against the violation of Jewish laws. The Gentile Christians were neither to provoke the conscience of the believing Jew by the violation of their traditional customs, nor were they to inflame the unbelieving Jew to added persecution by carelessly or wantonly flaunting their freedom from Jewish restrictions in front of them. This cautionary

burghers and peasants eat no red sausage, or blood-sausage, for that is not just thin blood, but blood that has been thickened and cooked, a very course blood. Likewise we must not eat rabbits or birds for, according to the laws of the chase, they are all strangled [snared], even though they are not cooked in blood, but only fried."

1. Peake, op. cit., pp. 17-22.

2. Acts 15:21.

note was added so that no arrogancy of the ruling Gentile Christians would chide the smoldering intolerance of the narrow Jew, who now as a Christian had to admit that the Gentile was his equal, and as an unbeliever had to watch fellow Jews accept the despised Goyim as equivalents. The injunction against fornication was added to the prohibitions of ceremonial defilement because such unchastity, though abhorrent to the Jewish character because of many centuries of prophetic exhortation, was as yet accepted by the Gentiles as only a peccadillo.¹ So understood, the apostolic decree would have been a complete vindication of Paul's point of view, and entirely acceptable to him. The Judaizers were explicitly censured,² the Gentiles were freed from everything except love and prudence, and the unity of the Church was insured and strengthened.

The apostolic decree requested a compromise in practice, but upheld Gentile freedom in principle. Paul followed this decision throughout his life. It is true that never does he mention the decree in his letters, but always does he practice its sound judgement. Paul iterates the substance of the decree in his word to the Corinthians: "To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews; to those under the law I became as one under the law--though not being myself under the law--that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law--not being

1. Menander, fragment 657K, "A mother loves her child more than a father does, for she knows it's her own while he but thinks it's his."

2. Acts 15:24.

without law toward God but under the law of Christ—that I might win those outside the law."¹ On the one hand, Paul was willing to eat with the Gentiles,² and it was widely known that he taught that it was unnecessary to keep the law.³ But on the other hand, he was equally willing to maintain the observance of the law when he was with people who demanded or appreciated such courtesy. He personally circumcised the half-Jew Timothy,⁴ and he made no objection to the circumcision of Titus.⁵ According to the rule he gave that everyone should "remain in the state in which he was called",⁶ he himself may have continued to observe the law as far as possible. Even toward the end of the record of his life he claimed to be a Pharisee.⁷ But he never demanded that Jewish Christians reject the law and live like Gentiles. So it is that his accord with the Jerusalem decree is complete; so complete that it may be regarded as the vindication of his gospel.

There is one argument, however, which does occur to suggest that Paul was not entirely satisfied with the apostolic decree. He writes of that trip to Jerusalem that "Titus, who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, though he was a Greek".⁸ It appears that finally Titus was circumcised, and the best construction that Paul can place upon it is that he was not compelled to be

1. I Cor. 9:20, 21.

2. Gal. 2:12, by implication.

3. Acts 21:21

4. Acts 16:3.

5. Galatians 2:3.

6. I Corinthians 7:20.

7. Acts 23:6.

8. Galatians 2:3.

circumcised. It may be that Luke does not mention Titus or his circumcision anywhere in Acts lest the Judaizers seize upon him as an example of a Greek who was circumcised as a result of the Jerusalem Council.¹ However, any debate as to the possibility of Titus' circumcision is totally irrelevant to the matter of Gentile freedom. Paul's victory lies in the fact that Titus was not compelled to be circumcised. And there Paul had won his point. Circumcision of the Greek Christians was not required, although practical considerations may have made it commendatory. If Titus did undergo the painful Jewish ritual (in an age which lacked anesthesia), it was a measure of his consideration for Jewish sentiment, and not a cause for the Judaizers to claim a victory. Paul was willing to continue to live as a Jew and even to allow a Greek to be circumcised, if only because "It was right to give the synagogue an honorable funeral".²

F. Paul Vigilant to Maintain Apostolic Decree

So it was that the Judaizers were shorn of all their supposed approbation from the Jerusalem church. The Judaizers had made the mistake of making Paul's gospel synonymous with heresy and had thereby only confirmed their own orthodoxy in stagnation. They had lost the decision of the Council, and they had lost it unanimously. The apostles, the elders, and the assembly, all in the Holy Spirit, agreed that no burden should be laid upon the Gentiles except that of prudence and love. Three of the apostles at the Council are

1. Knox, op. cit., (Church of Jerusalem), pp. 189, 190.

2. Luther, op. cit., Vol. V, p. 199, mistakenly quoting Augustine.

mentioned by name, "James and Cephas and John".¹ These three were the leaders of the Jerusalem church, and they all offered the right hand of fellowship to Paul—yet each of these three had difficulty in subsequent years in abiding by the spirit of the decree themselves. Even though the decision of the Council was unanimous at the time, the post-conciliar influence of the Judaizers remained strong enough to sway these chief apostles away from the Jerusalem declaration. It was not Paul, but the pillars of the Church, who risked ignoring the apostolic decree. The Petrine defection is famous, James hedged salvation by faith alone with cautionary restrictions, and even John classed eating food which had been sacrificed to idols in the same class with immorality. Perhaps Paul's gospel was too thoroughgoing for them, teaching not only that the Gentiles need not subject themselves to law when they become Christians, but that the law had come to its end for the Jews as well. This was an absolute transformation of the old way of comprehending God's revelation. Even the united voice of the Jerusalem Council did not succeed in settling the question of Gentile freedom once and for all, for the apostles who had formulated this charter of Gentile freedom themselves later found themselves apologists of the consciences of the Judaizers.

Here the
idea is given
of John
with the
vision of the
Apocalypse
is introduced.

Peter was the first. The Council had approved the release of Gentile Christians from obligatory circumcision and from the

1. Galatians 2:9.

observance of the ceremonial law. But the Council left Jewish Christians free to continue in their ancestral customs. When Peter, the chief Jewish Christian, came to the mixed church at Antioch, he at first demonstrated the liberating and unifying effect of the gospel by disregarding the common understanding of the Jews that it was illegal to eat with non-Jews. But when Jewish Christians taking exception to this relaxed attitude to the law arrived from James' Jerusalem church, Peter withdrew from the tables of the Gentile Christians out of deference to their stricter view. Until this time the mixed church at Antioch had flourished without factionalism,¹ but the contention arose when Judaizers imported schism from Jerusalem.² It is not known that James' emissaries had insisted that the law of not eating with Gentiles be enforced upon the Jewish Christians at Antioch. Paul does not make this charge, and it may not be necessary to conclude that they had so insisted. Yet Paul roundly condemned Peter's action. Why? Had not Paul himself taught that it was best to suppress one's freedom in the interest of peace in instances where the hearty exercise of mature stature in Christ evoked the pained disapproval of less mature brothers?³ And was not Peter acting in accord with the spirit of the apostolic decree in not abusing freedom to the detriment of the Jewish conscience, even though that conscience

But I don't
in later years
he went
at Antioch.

1. Acts 14:26, 27.

2. Acts 15:1, 2.

3. I Corinthians 8:13; 9:20-22; 10:32, 33.

be unreasonably hyper-sensitive? It was Paul's opinion, however, that Peter was not exercising his Christian charity by withdrawing from the Gentiles—he was baring to the Judaizers the same vacillating fearfulness of men that a previous example of his behavior had already exposed as a part of his nature.¹ Peter's deportment, in that it was motivated by fear and not by a generous gesture of voluntary self-limitation, indicates that the action was wrong. Paul rebukes him for concealing his true conviction—that in Christ all men are one. Peter had eaten with the Gentiles as a free man. He withdrew from the Gentiles only when the men from James appeared. Paul's point is that Peter was insincere—i. e., he did not make it known that he really was free to live as a Gentile. For had Peter acted out of love toward his brothers, Paul would have had to approve. But Peter left the impression upon the Gentiles that the Judaizers had really been right all along. Paul opposes Peter's motive, not his deed, and he rebukes his duplicity, not his doctrine. Paul's rebuke of Peter is further proof that it is no more than myth that "the Christian Church in the apostolic age was a paradise of inhuman unanimity".²

But of wider importance than Peter's unwillingness to reveal his opposition to the Judaizers is his misjudgment of the seriousness of the issues at stake. His deference to the Judaizers may have been in his own eyes a temporary expedient and appeasement, but Paul saw that the legalizers would seize upon it as a defection to their

1. Mt. 26:69-75, Mk. 14:66-72, Luke 22:54-62, John 18:25-27.

2. Blunt, op. cit., p. 84.

cause and as sufficient justification for their rescinding of the apostolic decree. Peter's wayward precedent had already led Barnabas the Levite and the other Jews in Antioch to follow his separatist example.¹ Peter's course would result in Jew and Gentile not eating together even at the Lord's table! Had Paul not immediately moved to recapture Peter's influence and example at the time of the Antiochene crisis, it is probable that a great section of the Christian Church would have practiced the ancient Jewish discriminatory prejudices for an indeterminate number of years.

The manner of Paul's rebuke to Peter--as he recalls it in Galatians 2:14--is so worded that the serious import of Peter's action is pressed upon him. There is doubt as to where Paul's recollection of his words to Peter in the text ends, but it surely includes the first sentence. And in this first sentence is the heart of the dilemma which Paul proposed to Peter. One would expect that Paul would rebuke Peter with words somewhat like these, "'If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, why do you pretend to the Jews that you have lived all along like a Jew?'" But Paul words the rebuke much more trenchantly, "'If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?'" Paul's way of phrasing his question reveals several things. 1. Peter did not intend to compel the Gentiles to live like Jews. 2. He did not realize that his action would result in compelling the

1. Galatians 2:13.

Gentiles to live like Jews. 3. He had not realized that he was yielding to the Judaizers because of fear of them. So once again it was Paul, and Paul alone, who saw the significance of the gospel, and who kept even the Apostle Peter from adulterating its purity by inconstancy. And the great-hearted fisherman was big enough to correct his error, and later wrote to some of Paul's converts the truth Paul had taught him, "Live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil."¹ Paul in turn accepted and acknowledged Peter to be equal in the faith,² and denied that the schismatic parties in Corinth, which had taken on the names of several of the Church leaders, could rightly appeal to supposed cleavages among their namesakes to justify their own divisions.

James the Lord's brother and John the beloved disciple both had difficulty assimilating and practicing the Pauline principle to which they had agreed in Jerusalem. James probably was protecting his own Jewish sensibilities as well as those of other Jews when he gave his judgement that he should not trouble Gentiles who turn to God so long as they abstain from the four restrictions which he suggested. And it seems that it was James whose objection was the final obstacle overcome at the Council, because, even though Peter had already concurred with Paul's declaration, it was only after James capitulated that the accord could finally be found. And even after the Jerusalem Council, James' name could be used to fend off counterattacks by those who subverted the Pauline

1. I Peter 2:16.

2. I Corinthians 3:21-23.

proclamation. Paul hints at his impatience with James' reluctance to declare himself clearly for Gentile freedom when he makes the notation that the trouble-makers who came to Antioch were from James,¹ a fact which Luke's account charitably omits. The epistle of James, which is generally agreed to have been written by this same man, also shows that even though he could talk of liberty, it was not without speaking about the law at the same time.² It is true, then, that even though James stood on the same platform of faith as Paul, and even though James later had cause to glorify God because of Paul's ministry,³ his mission as an evangelist to the Jews did not give him the same opportunity to emphasize ideas of freedom and equality, with the result that he never became more than a passive supporter of these corollaries of redemption in Christ.

John, the third pillar of the Jerusalem church, also defended Jewish scruples to the Gentiles. Decades after Jerusalem, when he was writing to the seven churches of Asia Minor (all seven of which were located in Gentile cities of magnificent proportions), John decried the Gentile practice of eating food which had been sacrificed to idols, and classed it as a degradation equivalent to immorality.⁴ John made it clear that he thought that the Gentiles ought to bend to the scruples of the Jews, saying, "I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who

1. Galatians 2:12.

2. James 1:25, 2:12.

3. Acts 21:16-20.

4. Revelation 2:14, 2:20.

taught Balak to put a stumbling-block before the sons of Israel, that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice immorality."¹ When Paul wrote to the Gentiles about this identical problem of Jewish taboo, he came to a similar conclusion but made it clear that the whole matter of eating food was strictly amoral, and that it was the Jewish—not the Gentile—attitude which should really be altered.² Consequently, while the end result of the exhortation of either John or Paul was outwardly the same, Paul thought it of basic importance to make the true motivation clear, so that the doctrine of Gentile freedom might be preserved unblemished.

G. The Momentous Significance of the Separation of Church and Temple

The Jerusalem Council marked the "center and summit" of Acts; it was the watershed between "the Jewish-Christian Petrine part" and "the Gentile-Christian Pauline" part.³ Paul's emphasis on Gentile freedom is germinal, pivotal, and paramount in the interpretation of his evangel itself. Freedom is the idea which sparks his conversion, inspires him through the greatest struggle of his life, and structures his theology. Paul fought for a law-free gospel, and this fight dominates the New Testament outside the gospels.⁴ Paul, like the other apostles, believed in a salvation given in the grace of God, but, unlike the other apostles, he saw that the gospel of grace had to be applied to the problem of Gentile freedom. This insight is the finest example of Paul's originality. There is

1. Revelation 2:14.

2. I Corinthians 8:7-13.

3. J. Weiss, op. cit., (History of Primitive Christianity), Vol. I, p. 260.

4. Macgregor and Purdy, op. cit., p. 167.

nothing new in his teaching, nothing different from what the other apostles taught. But as someone has said, "Genius is the ability to see relationships," or as William James defined it, "the faculty of perceiving in an unhabitual way." Paul believed, he knew what he believed, he knew how it applied to life, and he applied it. That is greatness. Once the tremendous concept of justification by faith flashed into Paul's mind, he realized that this was the power of God, that power which could save man and demolish inequalities among men. This was the power which wrenched the Church from the synagogue, and Paul unleashed it. It is a remarkable tribute to the man himself that he had such a conviction of the relevancy of truth, such a disregard of contrary opinions, that he could maintain the thankless, stipendless, arduous, persecuted, single-handed ministry, and let nothing deflect him from his purpose. He is one of history's most brilliant examples of faith in action.

The significance of Paul's gospel becomes clear with the advantage of two thousand years of perspective. Christianity is today a world religion. "But for [Paul's] clear insight into the grave issues which were at stake, his freedom from the fear of men and undue deference to authority, his courage and tenacity, the new religion might have been fatally stranded in a backwater of Judaism."¹ It is astounding that so much of the history of succeeding centuries hinged upon this theological debate carried on in Jerusalem by a few Jews over whether the limited number of

1. Peake, op. cit., p. 32.

Gentile proselytes who had become Christians should be recognized as such even though they had not adopted Hebraic ritual requirements.¹ And while it is true, without qualification, that Paul

1. The Declaration of Independence, which proclaimed the will of the United States to become free from Great Britain, and which has had profound influence on American legal and constitutional development, is a document which "is full of [Thomas] Jefferson's fervent spirit and personality, and its ideals are those to which his life was consecrated." (The Encyclopaedia Britannica, (Fourteenth Edition; New York, 1929), Vol. 7, p. 125.) And it is certain that "Jefferson's political theory was that of Locke, whose words the Declaration echoes. Both Locke and Jefferson wrote simply of political equality, political freedom." (Ibid., p. 125.) Jefferson the Deist took the ideas of a Puritan and used them to effect the birth of a nation. John Locke, the son of a Puritan, and who studied under John Owen, Puritan Dean of Oxford, and who wrote A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul, (The Second Edition; London, printed by J. H. for Awnsham and John Churchill, 1709), was a life-long student of the epistles of Paul. He paraphrased Paul's epistles to the Galatians, Romans, Corinthians and Ephesians, with reference to the Greek, into what was then a clear English, and annexed explanatory notes and summaries of the contents. From this work it is clear that Locke had a penetrating understanding of Paul's ideas on Christian freedom and on the equality of Jew and Gentile Christians (Locke, op. cit., p. 4), and that he used the concept of Gentile deliverance from the legalism and particularism of Judaism through the grace of Jesus Christ as the key in unlocking the rest of Paul's doctrine. Locke's ideas on the equality of all men before their Creator were reinforced by Paul's, and may have been in part derivative. While it is widely acknowledged that principles of Christianity have contributed to the making of American democracy, this possible connection is unique in its directness. The freedom in Christ of all men, so staunchly maintained by the Apostle Paul, applied to politics by a Puritan and borrowed by a Deist, has become constitutive for the most powerful free nation in the world.

"was the first to recognize . . . that the Christian religion could never become a world-religion if it remained bound to the Mosaic Law",¹ he did not forward his message in order that Christianity might become a world religion. Paul fought for Gentile freedom because he found that message in the emancipative nature of the evangel itself. He saw the eternal consequences of what was being decided--consequences of eternal significance not for the Gentile souls he had won to the banner of his Lord, but for the obdurate among the Jewish Christians who could never mature in Christ without surrendering the pride of their bigotry. His unfaltering allegiance to spiritual matters did not fail to produce its good work in the world of human affairs.

And in the perspective of Heilsgeschichte, the significance of Gentile freedom may loom even larger. The revelation of God to Israel had always, though sometimes by the narrowest of margins, been contained within the Hebrew heritage. The Israelites were truculent with Moses, contemptuous of Jeremiah, heedless of Hosea--yet all the words of these prophets were treasured and guarded with devotion and fanatic courage by later generations. These prophets became the boast of a people who would not hear nor obey their admonitions. In the first century of the present era, Israel was asked to step into a new dimension, and, as usual, refused. But this time the oracle of God escaped them, and it escaped them almost totally. Under the leadership of an intense

1. Francis Ernest Hutchinson, Christian Freedom, (London, Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1920), p. 53. See lecture II, "Christian Freedom Asserted by St. Paul," pp. 45-84.

Jew, the heart of spiritual Judaism turned its major attention away from Israel and toward the Gentiles. The flame of divine prophecy had never been extinguished from Israel throughout the Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman oppressions—but in the first century the Jews themselves watched the Pentecostal fire ignite a new people with the knowledge of God. Contrary to the designs of the Christians themselves, and explicitly in opposition to Paul's most fervent hope, Christianity emerged from its native home and left the land where it should have been most welcome. Had the will of the early Christians prevailed, Christianity would today have been called Judaism, and the history of the Church would have been called the history of modern Israel. But Israel submitted to "the tyranny of a closed mind", identified stagnation with orthodoxy, thereby gifting progress to heresy, and prophetic renovation to Christianity. Emmanuel became Ichabod, but Lo-ammi became Ammi.

Gentile freedom was integral with God's design for the redemption of all mankind. This moment in time is the end of the ebb and the beginning of the flow for the spreading of the knowledge of God throughout the world. Before Christ, God's revelation had become more and more concentrated until it was consummated in the manifestation of his Son. After Christ, the time for the enlarging of the sphere of redemption to the entire cosmos had come upon the people of God. The course of the redemptive purpose has been summed like this: "Creation—mankind—Israel—the remnant—the One—the

apostles--the Church--mankind--the new creation."¹ But for the victory of Gentile freedom, the whole line of Heilsgeschichte from God to God through Christ would have been broken.

Paul's insistence on the right of Gentiles to become Christians on equal terms with the Jews who had become Christians, without Jewish conditions, was "his 'supreme contribution to the interpretation of Jesus'".² He succeeded in having the Judaizers censured when he secured the approval of the original disciples for his law-free Church, and at the same time cleared himself of the charge of being a "revolutionary renegade". He overcame the inertia and dispelled the reluctance within the Church itself against confessing that in Christ all men are equal and free. Paul was the single man of determination among the first believers --aside from Stephen--who understood and carried out the intention of Jesus. Freedom is a doctrine uniquely Pauline. In Jesus' teaching it was only latent, never foremost. Thoughts on freedom occurring in the non-Pauline epistles are consequences, perhaps even reactions, to Paul's progressive formulations. Every significant use of freedom in the non-Pauline epistles is in a context which is as much cautionary as it is liberative. These authors seem to be trying to tone down an idea which to them appears dangerously easy to misinterpret. Is it likely that they would so stringently modify a thought which they themselves initiated?

1. Oscar Cullmann, Christ and Time, translated by Floyd V. Filson, (London, S. C. M. Press, 1952), p. 178.

2. Hutchinson, op. cit., pp. 53, 54, quoting C. A. A. Scott.

All the evidence indicates that it is Paul whose vigilance, staunchness, and zealousness preserved the freedom that makes today's existence of an unfettered Church a reality, and whom God used to preserve the continuity of his eternal purpose.

Part Three: The Theology of Freedom

I. Freedom from Law: the First of Freedoms

The triumph of Gentile freedom at Jerusalem was the direct outcome of the mind and action of Paul. The years following were years of bitter conflict within the Church, and they were years of constant work and travel for the Apostle. Twice he traveled from Antioch through Asia Minor, Macedonia, Achaia, and back to Jerusalem; and then the long one-way journey to Rome. En route he composed numerous long letters of rebuttal, doctrine, exhortation, and sent them to the great cities where there were colonies of Christians. At least ten of these letters, and fragments of others, are preserved to this day in the New Testament, and from these it is possible to reconstruct Paul's argument against law. Constant exercise in "the good fight of the faith"¹ has multiplied as well as edged his weapons since Jerusalem, and his polemic broadens from the fact that God had accepted the Gentiles when he gave them the Holy Spirit to arguments from Scripture, experience and reason. Paul begins to build a theology of freedom.

1. I Timothy 6:12.

A. Freedom could not be Attained by the Law

Paul's struggles with the Judaizers forced him to an explanation of what indeed was converted in his conversion. Does Paul the Christian differ from Saul the Jew in integrity, uprightness, or morality? Does Paul the Christian live any more in accord with the commandments of God than had Saul the Jew? Never! On the contrary, the Christian was accused of relaxing his Judaism. He was converted not from dissolution to purity, nor from indifference to concern. What was changed was his basic outlook, not the percentage of his accomplishment of righteousness. Paul obeyed the commandments no longer in order to win favor, but because favor had been granted. He received his justification instead of trying to secure it; he trusted for it instead of trying to make a claim for it. Paul's outward conduct, as Jew or Christian, remained substantially the same. What was converted was his motivation, and the change of his motivation revolutionized his life. The essence of Paul's conversion was that he had found in Christ the freedom that he could not find in the commandments. Johannes Weiss asks the critical question that faced the Apostle: "How was it then possible that the commandment of the holy God, instead of leading him to God, had driven him ever further away?"¹

A question of this nature is impossible for a Jew to formulate.

"Paul's definition of righteousness as perfect conformity with the law of God would never have been conceded by a Jewish opponent, to whom it would have been equivalent to admitting that God had mocked man by offering to him salvation on terms they both knew to be impossible—God, because he had made man a creature of the dust with

1. J. Weiss, op. cit., (Christliche Freiheit), p. 14.

all his human frailties (Psalm 103:14) and implanted in him the 'evil impulse'; man, above all the conscientious man, through his daily experience."¹

When Paul became converted, his conception of righteousness was advanced to the perfect righteousness of God, for in Christ he had learned the meaning of the promise of righteousness entrusted to Isaiah: "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength".² Paul's conversion led him from uncertainty of attainment to the joy of knowing that he had been given all for which he had been searching.

"The price of guilt is chastisement. This dark, somber truth means that anything less than perpetual chastisement is an undeserved bounty, warranting paeans of thanks to a beneficent nature or a merciful God. Every reward is an unwarranted gift, for men are guilty beings always failing to do all they ought, all they are under obligation to do."³

Paul's brief encounter with the spiritual religion of Stephen had loosened the mortar of his Jewish convictions, and his vision of the risen Christ had finally crumbled them. The Pharisee who had been the defender and apologist of the law becomes the Christian who must now, in the light of freedom, construct a better explanation of its intent, significance, and relevancy. He sets out, not to overthrow God's revelation to his ancestors, but to demonstrate how all that is implicit in the Hebrew Scriptures becomes explicit in Christ. In the last analysis, it is sin, not law, which has perverted God's truth, and law has been corrupted into a vain system called legalism.

1. Moore, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 495.

2. Isaiah 30:15. Cf. II Corinthians 12:9.

3. Paul Weiss, op. cit., pp. 250, 251.

1. The law was a temporary revelation.

The law was temporary because it was parenthetical, having a time of initiation and another of fulfillment. "The Epistle to the Galatians repudiates outright the Jewish view of the Mosaic Law as a code which, because it was divinely ordained, was therefore of everlasting validity, and must be observed as a condition of salvation."¹ Paul proposed that the law was never intended to be accepted as everlasting because it was antedated by a more momentous revelation. a. Circumcision, which was instituted with Abraham, could not have been the sign of a consummate covenant because earlier in Abraham's life he had already been justified by faith.² b. Moses preceded Christ in point of time, but Christ in truth preceded him because he was chosen before the foundation of the world.³ Paul points out that this is legitimate reasoning because even though Ishmael, the son of the slave woman, preceded Isaac, the son of the free woman, yet it was Isaac who was blessed of God—just because he had been appointed as the heir.⁴ c. The law of Moses was antedated by the promise to Abraham, given 430 years earlier, the time of the duration of the captivity in Egypt.⁵ Thus Paul concludes that the true sons of Abraham are not those who are circumcised, nor those who are descended from the patriarch by natural generation, nor those who follow in the law of Moses, but those who are the faithful in believing the promises of God.

1. Hunt, op. cit., p. 59. 2. Romans 4:9-12.

3. Ephesians 1:4.

5. Galatians 3:17.

4. Genesis 15:1-6, 17:15-21, pointed out by Paul in Galatians 4:21-31.

The pristine will of God is faith, not law, and those who follow it are justified. To this day, Moses, the father of the obedient, remains the greatest of the Hebrew prophets in the estimation of the Jews, but Abraham, the father of the faithful, has that exalted position for Christians. Paul did not disdain Moses, but simply indicated that if there must be a conflict, the Jews must recognize that there will be a conflict between Abraham and Moses, if there is a conflict between Moses and Christ. d. The law has not only a beginning in time, but an end as well. "Christ is the end (τέλος, purpose) of the law".¹ Jeremiah spoke of the eventual termination of the law: "In those days, says the Lord, they shall no more say, 'The ark of the covenant of the Lord.' It shall not come to mind, or be remembered, or missed; it shall not be made again."² This is fulfilled in Christ, as the author of Hebrews repeatedly indicates: Christ "has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."³ Consequently, the law is temporary, a parenthesis in the eternal will of God.

2. The law was thought to be automatic.

Paul came to believe that God had never intended that the law should carry the promise. The promise was made to Abraham and his Offspring Jesus,⁴ and not to every person who happens to have been circumcised according to the law. They have the promise who are of the Offspring of Abraham, be they circumcised or uncircumcised.⁵

1. Romans 10:4.

2. Jeremiah 3:16.

3. Hebrews 9:26.

4. Galatians 3:16.

5. Romans 4:9-12.

Paul iterates his point that the law is replaced by promise in Romans 9:6-9, using a different analogy. Abraham's true descendants are traced through Isaac instead of through Ishmael,¹ even though both were sons of Abraham and even though Isaac was the younger son. It is clear to Paul that there is in operation here a principle which is independent of natural generation. What is the ground of the distinction between Isaac and Ishmael? Just the decree of God that the heritage belongs to Isaac. Therefore God suspends the law of physical inheritance himself, and replaces it with his promise. Or, to put it more exactly, there never was a law of physical inheritance. The promise has always been independent of any claim man might think he could require of God. Jesus is the promise God gave to Abraham. All those who are in Christ are within the promise, regardless of whom their forefathers may have been. "So you see that it is men of faith who are the sons of Abraham."²

3. The law was mediatorial.

The law was a secondary revelation because it had an inferior ministration, for it was "ordained by angels through an intermediary" (Moses),³ but the knowledge of the gospel comes without angelic or human mediation—"for I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ."⁴ The author of the epistle to the Hebrews draws this thought out by a direct comparison of the angels with the Son according to

1. Genesis 21:12.

2. Gal. 3:7. Cf. Mt. 3:9, Luke 3:8.

3. Galatians 3:19.

4. Galatians 1:12.

Old Testament prophecies,¹ but the essence of the idea is present also in Galatians.

Paul says this in his allegory of Sarah and Hagar,² although in this case his motivation is clearer than his example. As Blunt says, "Once again, the force of the conclusion depends less on the allegorizing dialectic than on the conviction that freedom is a higher condition than legal obedience, and that Christ gives freedom."³ Paul is here not trying to prove by Scriptural quotations that the law is inferior to free grace, but he is illustrating it with an Old Testament parallel. He starts with the presupposition that the children of the law are in bondage and that the children of grace are in freedom. This is so, he says, because those in bondage are children of slavery, like Hagar, and those who are free are children of emancipation, like Sarah. Law is as inferior to grace as Hagar is to Sarah, for the first was a female slave, but the other a free-born wife. Similarly, the law had a ministration inferior to grace. The difference in ministration is that the law was made with Moses and his people, but grace was made possible through Jesus Christ for his people.

4. The law occasions condemnation.

The law was inferior in purpose, for it does not save but condemns. It was thought by the Jews that the law was instituted for man's salvation, although one unique passage in the Apocrypha

1. Hebrews 1:1-14.

2. Galatians 4:21-31.

3. Blunt, op. cit., p. 115.

offers an interpretation more in accord with the Pauline view, "We who received the Law will perish because we sinned, along with our heart which received it; but the Law does not perish, but abides in its glory".¹ Paul puts it more strongly, "For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law since through the law comes knowledge of sin".² The law was instituted as a "custodian",³ to "confine" and "restrain", but not to save. The law results in man's condemnation, not his salvation, for not only does it expose sin, but it increases it.⁴

Paul, like his fellow Jews, thought of righteousness when he thought of the law, but he thought of that perfect righteousness which belonged only to God. The law, in Paul's mind, was connected with the human sin it revealed, and sin always meant death. The Hebrews were the first to see the causal relation between sin and death: "The soul that sins shall die".⁵ But Paul saw that the concomitant of law as well as of sin is death--and this was something new. Paul observed two universal facts--all men sin and all men die. He observed also that the Jews who had the light of the law sinned too, and were enabled by the fact of the law to sin worse than the Gentiles. "For, as it is written, 'The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.'"⁶ The law required of Israel a higher standard of life than of the pagan nations, but they failed just as much as the pagans. Hence, the law actually

1. II Esdras 9:36, 37.

2. Romans 3:20.

3. Galatians 3:24, 25.

4. Romans 5:20.

5. Ezekiel 18:4, 20. Cf. Deuteronomy 30:15-20.

6. Romans 2:24.

resulted in making their sin worse than the pagan's sin, because the chasm between their instruction and their deeds was greater than between the pagan's instruction and his deeds. It was the law which resulted in this greater measure of sin.

It is not only sin and death which are causally related, but it is law, sin, and death. "While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death."¹ "For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me."² "It was sin, working death in me through what is good."³ "I see in my members . . . the law of sin . . . Who will deliver me from this body of death?"⁴ "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law."⁵ Law-sin-death is a triadic concept in the thought of Paul.

The hard fact of life remains—the law is impossible to fulfill.⁶ That means that all are cursed⁷ and subject to the wrath of God.⁸ The Apostle understood the difficulty of obeying the law even more clearly than those who suffered persecution from oppressive governments because they tried to keep the law. To take on the obligation or the "yoke" of the law is not only to court persecution, suffering, and physical death, but it is to run the risk of sin. If a Jew who does not know Christ is to find God at all, he has no choice but to

1. Romans 7:5.

2. Romans 7:11.

3. Romans 7:13.

4. Romans 7:23, 24.

5. I Corinthians 15:56.

6. Romans 3:23.

7. Galatians 3:10.

8. Romans 1:18-23.

approach God by means of the law, even though the law proclaims the brilliant purity of God and, by every increasing contrast, illuminates the gross imperfections of the seeker. This then, showing the need for salvation, is the true purpose of the law. It is designed not to abandon man to his own resources, but to cause him to throw himself upon the mercy of God. Presupposing the unity between what God had done in the history of Israel, and what God had done in Christ, it was impossible that there be two systems of salvation, grace and law. The Apostle solves the apparent contradiction by teaching that the law was instituted to force man to take recourse in grace as it is revealed in Christ.

5. The law was ineffective.

The law was ineffective in securing righteousness. It has already been pointed out that the law was not intended to bring man to salvation. "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."¹ We "know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ . . . because by works of the law shall no one be justified."² "Now it is evident that no man is justified before God by the law."³ The law is ineffective not only because the practical experience of trying to abide by it and failing is so

1. Romans 8:3, 4.

2. Galatians 2:16.

3. Galatians 3:11.

universal, but because it operates without taking faith as its fundamental principle. Paul quotes Leviticus 18:5¹ in making this point: "He who does the statutes and ordinances shall live by them".² Paul converts this passage from a promise into a warning, because the man who agrees to follow the law in the hope of gaining righteousness must consider the risk--the inevitability--of failure, which will only bring down additional curse upon himself. The man who enters into contract with God to keep the law obligates himself to keep all of it.³ Paul denies that he intends to overthrow the law,⁴ and on the contrary terms the law "holy",⁵ "spiritual",⁶ "good",⁷ and "just".⁸ Every man must recognize that it is because the law is holy that sinful man is condemned. The only possible function of law is negative because of the sinful nature of man. And even if one willingly suspends disbelief, and for a moment imagines that some extraordinary man does fulfill the law, he still would have accomplished no more than what is properly to be expected of him. "The liberation in Christ in regard to the Mosaic law does not signify that the law must not be observed, but that it ceases to be a means of salvation."⁹ The law is ineffective, not because it does not come from God, but because it depends upon man.

1. Cf. Neh. 9:29, Ez. 20:11, 13, 21.

2. Gal. 3:12, cf. Rom. 10:5. 3. Galatians 5:3.

4. Romans 3:31.

5. Romans 7:12.

6. Romans 7:14.

7. Romans 7:12, 16.

8. Romans 7:12, 8:4.

9. Grimm, op. cit., p. 16.

6. The law was displaced.

The law was replaced by an effective way to transform lives from a hopeless involvement with sin to a triumphant victory over it. "Let this be known to you therefore, brethren, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him every one that believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses".¹ This is accomplished because the will of the individual is now aligned with the purpose of God through faith instead of against it through works. The sinner is freed by the Spirit from the useless fatigue of ineffective attempts to accomplish the law. Freedom and Spirit are connected with the fulfillment of the law. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom,"² and "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death."³ Thus Paul concludes that "God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."⁴

The law is proved ineffective by experience, and by the existence of a way to find reconciliation apart from the law. The proof of Paul's thesis always hinges on this latter argument. The Gentiles have been enabled to comply with the real meaning of the law without being chained to its extraneous details. Paul's

1. Acts 13:38, 39.

2. II Corinthians 3:17.

3. Romans 8:2.

4. Romans 8:3, 4.

strongest argument against the Judaizers is always this—look at the Gentile believers and learn. Gentiles do live lives which display that godliness which is the intention of the law. No wonder the Apostle laid such heavy emphasis on Christian conduct in his letters to the Gentiles, and no wonder he rejoiced in seeing God at work among his non-Jewish equals. "You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on your hearts, to be known and read by all men; and you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."¹ This was for himself the daily encouragement of his ministry—the visible transformation of non-Jewish lives in response to his proclamation of a law-free gospel. And it was his personal experience that a Jew could find in Christ what he was never able to find in legalism. The motivation for his own prodigious labor was always that he might display by his life that his gospel was true. He "worked harder than any of them",² and he did so in order to buttress the theme of his ministry and epistles—that Jew and Gentile alike and without law are admitted to the knowledge of God. "Paul, as a Jew, had thought that men should keep the Law in order that they might be saved. As a Christian he saw that men must be saved in order that they might keep the Law."³ Therefore he had to

1. II Corinthians 3:2, 3. Cf. I Corinthians 1:4.

2. I Corinthians 15:10.

3. Charles A. Anderson Scott, Christianity According to St. Paul, (Cambridge, The University Press, 1927), p. 45.

keep the law in order to demonstrate that it was dispensable. And his converts had to keep the intention of the law in order to demonstrate that righteousness is manifested apart from the law. The truth had to be established by the holiness of its application. If the law was obsolete, grace had to perform at least as well as law, and this is why Paul by exhortation and example stressed performance.

7. The law was discriminatory.

The law was particularistic and restrictive. It was given to a particular people, as Paul admits,¹ and not the law only, but "the oracles of God",² "the sonship, the glory, the covenants . . . the worship, the promises . . . the patriarchs, and . . . the Christ."³ The Jews had long treasured the promise that in Abraham "all the families of the earth shall be blessed",⁴ but thought of themselves as brokers⁵ between God and the rest of the world. They lost the sense of their own responsibility toward God, and replaced it with an attitude of superiority toward the Gentiles. Paul forcibly rejects this view. God is not dispensed by any group of people, and he cannot be comprehended by any system of ideas. No one has a monopoly on God. "Is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of the Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also."⁶ The law cannot be the full revelation of God because it is restricted to the mediatorship of Judaism. And indeed the law

1. Romans 9:4.

2. Romans 3:2.

3. Romans 9:4, 5.

4. Gen. 12:3, 18:18, 22:18.

5. Romans 2:17-20.

6. Romans 3:29.

is not the full revelation of God, because the full revelation (or mystery, as Paul sometimes calls it) has now been made known. The prophets—Moses and Hosea, but especially Isaiah—repeatedly declared that the Gentiles would some day find God,¹ but now it is publicly declared that the distinction between Jew and Gentile is abolished.² This is the mystery of the universal Church which, though hinted of by the prophets and promised by Jesus,³ is first clearly declared and championed by Paul. "When you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that is, how the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."⁴

The mystery of the universal Church is being unfolded to the Gentiles who believe, but for the Jews who do not believe, the veil of incredulity remains in place before their eyes, and they cannot understand that the Gentiles are equal with themselves in the sight of God.

"Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their minds; but when a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."⁵

1. Rom. 9:24-33, 10:19-21. 2. Gal. 3:28, Eph. 2:14, Col. 3:11.

3. Matthew 16:18.

5. II Corinthians 3:15-18.

4. Ephesians 3:4-6. Cf. Rom. 16:25, 26, Eph. 1:9, Col. 1:25-27.

Mystery and universalism, Spirit and freedom are interrelated ideas. But the Judaizers cannot allow the possibility of the former, and so they close their eyes to the evidence of the latter. They steel their minds against it ("their minds were hardened"¹), and because Paul will persist in denying their claim to an exclusive patronage of God, they attempt to silence him with threat of death,² and succeed in having him kept under arrest for all of the known final years of his life. And his imprisonments were the direct result of his growing conviction of the relevancy of freedom in Christ, for he speaks of it as such—"I Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles . . ."³ and ". . . the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison . . ."⁴ The Law which was the property of one people could not be the full revelation of the God who is God of all people.

B. Christ is the Beginning and the End of the Law

Paul's doctrine of freedom from law was heresy in the eyes of all faithful to the rabbinic principles. His kind of freedom denies every cardinal tenet in Judaism. It denies that the law is eternally fixed and permanent, and permits change, innovation and progress in the human comprehension of the purpose of God. It denies that the law is complete, that it was intended to save, that it does save, that it can save, that it is the exclusive way

1. II Corinthians 3:14.

2. Acts 22:21, 22.

3. Ephesians 3:1.

4. Colossians 4:3.

to salvation, and even that it is any longer of paramount importance for Jew and Gentile. "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law."¹ "Christ is the end of the law."² Christ has blotted out "the bond which stood against us with its legal demands . . . nailing it to the cross."³ "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us."⁴ "You are not under law but under grace."⁵ The law is dead.⁶

1. Christ is the beginning as well as the end of the law.

It is not, however, true to Paul to overemphasize the religion of liberty as the absolute antithesis of the religion of obedience. The law is fulfilled in Christ, but it is not finished; it is abrogated, but not abolished. "Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law."⁷ Christ has accomplished the purpose of the law for the Christian "in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us".⁸ Christ has destroyed the curse of the law so that the Christian may give obedience to the law without suffering for it.

1. Romans 8:2.

2. Romans 10:4.

3. Colossians 2:14.

4. Galatians 3:13.

5. Romans 6:14.

6. Albert Schweitzer, in his Mysticism of Paul, p. 194, maintains that Paul's doctrine of delivery from the law was because of his indifference to it because of the impending end of the world. This hypothesis does not answer several questions. Does mere carelessness of the law adequately explain the Jewish virulence against Paul? Paul may have been indifferent about the observance of law by Jews, but did he not insist that it was of the essence of the gospel that the Gentiles be freed from law? And, if Paul did not settle the matter of the law's end, who did?

7. Romans 3:31.

8. Romans 8:4.

The Christian is in no sense under a double hegemony, Christ and law, but is subject to Christ alone. Christians are servants of Christ, in whom the law is perfected. Paul is never a proponent of a freedom against the law or apart from it—his is a freedom within law, i. e., within Christ. "Those who are led by the Spirit are no longer under the law. Nor are they above the law. They have passed on into the other side of things, they are in the inner substance of the law, where the law is no longer seen from without as law, but from within, as love."¹ Anderson Scott makes a similar observation:

"That is the distinction between the Law as a system whereby men could secure, or thought they could secure, 'righteousness' by merit, and the contents of the Law, the Divine requirement as to the character and conduct of men. In the former sense the Law had come to an end. In the latter sense it remained valid for Jews and Christians, though not valid in quite the same sense for both."²

Paul contemplated the transmutation of the law of Moses into a law which emanates from within. Child puts this very clearly,

"Freedom is the Pauline name for that larger experience of life which is increasingly realized by those who see and respond to the sovereign Will of God not as a decree pressing externally upon them, but as at once the innermost law of their own being and the Supreme Good of all finite souls."³

All men are subject to some law, whether they be Jews, Gentiles or Christians. All men are subjects because they are creatures.

"None of us lives to himself."⁴ The possibility of man's being

1. Jacques Maritain, The Living Thoughts of Saint Paul, translated by Harry Lorin Blinse, (London, Cassell and Company, 1942), p. 6.

2. Scott, op. cit., p. 42. 3. Child, op. cit., pp. 120, 121.

4. Romans 14:7.

his own master is not open to him because of his creaturehood. And when man subjects his creaturehood to sin, he then surrenders his freedom to be mastered by his Creator. Because it is not possible for man to be his own subject, he must be subject either to the law of God and his Christ or to the law of sin and death. The Christian is subject to a new law, "the law of Christ".¹ To be a subject of the law of Christ is to be a subject of freedom. For in Christ, "all things are yours, whether . . . the world or life or death or the present or the future, all are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's".²

"The law of love is as much a law as the law of circumcision. But the difference between the two laws is nevertheless radical: (1) the law of love, 'the Law of Christ', is not a prescription of external observance. It is a command 'to be' such and such (2) In Christianity rules are not of the essence of its spirit, but are a mere inference from it. (3) Especially, the whole atmosphere of religious life is changed from that of a King's Court to that of a Father's Home The Christian obedience is not the acceptance of a 'heteronomy', i. e. of a law imposed from outside, but is really autonomous In this way God's 'service' becomes 'perfect freedom'. To serve Him is to be free, cui servire regnare est."³

Aquinas explains it this way:

"We must observe, that the sons of God are led by the Holy Spirit, not as though they were slaves, but as being free. For, since to be free is to be cause of one's own actions, we are said to do freely what we do of ourselves. Now this is what we do willingly; and what we do unwillingly, we do not freely but under compulsion. This compulsion may be absolute, when the cause is wholly extraneous, and the patient contributes nothing to the action, for instance, when a man is compelled to move by force: or it may be partly voluntary, as when a man is willing to do or suffer that which is less opposed to his will, in order to avoid that which is more

1. I Cor. 9:21, Gal. 6:2. Davies, op. cit., p. 147, over-expresses himself when he says that it may be possible to think of Paul as the great Tanna of the Gentiles, the law-giver of Christianity. Although Paul does have a σὺν ἡμῶν as well as a κρίνοντες ὑμᾶς, it is never true that "in the words of Jesus Paul had found a New Torah".

2. I Cor. 3:21-23.

3. Blunt, op. cit., p. 124.

opposed thereto. Now, the Holy Spirit inclines us to act, in such a way as to make us act willingly, inasmuch as He causes us to be lovers of God. Hence the sons of God are led by the Holy Spirit to act freely and for love, not slavishly, and for fear: wherefore the Apostle says [Rom. viii. 15]: You have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons."¹

The law has come to its end, and yet it remains. It has ended as a method, but not as an ideal; it has ended as a way for man to grasp after God, but not as a measure of the righteousness which God can give to man; it has ended as a curse, but not as a revelation of God's holiness. Therefore Paul, without hesitation, continues to use the word law of the relation between the believer and Christ.

2. The distinctions between the laws of Christ and Moses.

The law of Christ differs from the law of Moses in embodying only the ethical and the moral and the spiritual intent of the Mosaic rule. Paul tacitly drew a distinction between the moral law and the cultic law. The prophets and Jesus had already hinted at this distinction, but Paul drew it out further.

"Freedom from the Law also actualizes itself in the freedom to differentiate between the valid and the non-valid, according to its content, within the Law as it has been handed down. Paul did not work out this problem in detail That is, Paul does not hold the cultic and ritualistic rites of the Law to be valid, but only the ethical commandments."²

This distinction wipes away the entire Jewish conception of sin by mistake, accidental sin. Ceremonial or ritualistic law means that error is without willful, knowledgeable or intentional

1. Thomas Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, iv. 22, quoted by Maritain, op. cit., p. 129.

2. Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, translated by Kendrick Grobel, (London, S. C. M. Press, 1952), Vol. I, p. 341.

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infringement of a cultic prohibition.¹ The obligation of obeying these ceremonies is no longer considered tantamount to the obligation of obeying the ten commandments themselves. This distinction also frees the believer from obligation to obey the civil law and the health regulations which were integral with the Mosaic law. The recognition of this distinction explains two things—how Paul can uphold the law² and at the same time disregard it,³ and how he can say that keeping part of the law obligates one to keep it all,⁴ and yet allow himself and other Jews to follow parts of it at will.⁵ The explanation of the first thing is that the intent of the law is to be realized because it is holy, but no man can hope to abide by the spiritual law alone, much less the entire Jewish ritual law, in order to obtain merit to barter with God. Anyhow, the ceremonial sections of the law are of no avail if the spiritual content of the law is disregarded. "Circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision."⁶ Moreover, if a man contracts to keep a part of the ritual law, he is obligated under the penalty of death to keep both the ritual and the moral law.⁷ Paul retains the spiritual law as the measure of Christian conduct, but refuses to admit that the Jewish ritual is any longer of any avail to Gentile or Jew. And as to the second thing, there is no reason why the Gentiles should think

1. See II Sam. 6:6-8, I Chron. 13:9-11.

2. Romans 3:31, 7:2.

3. Rom. 7:6, I Cor. 9:21.

4. Gal. 5:3. Cf. Acts 21:21, Gal. 4:10, 11, 5:1, Phil. 3:2, 3, Col. 2:16.

5. Acts 16:3, 21:26, 23:6, 24:14, I Cor. 7:18.

6. Romans 2:25.

7. Galatians 5:3.

it imperative for them to adopt Jewish customs in order to be better Christians--no matter what the Judaizers say--but neither is it obligatory for the Jewish Christians to overthrow their traditional manner of life just because they have become Christians.¹ Jewish mores may be left to wither as time moves by. One is obligated to abide by the law if he seeks to find his salvation by his obedience, but he may or may not continue in the ritual law if his salvation has already been granted him in Christ.

Christ emancipates the believer from the law and makes it possible for him to fulfill it out of a willing spirit. How is this emancipation accomplished? Brandt, in his essay on Christian freedom, recognizes that freedom is found in God alone: "The New Testament statement of freedom is, in the last analysis, the witness to God's essence and action, and also the witness to the bondage and transitoriness of this world."² He recognizes also that freedom is accomplished in Christ.³ But he makes the error of defining freedom primarily as the result of loving service to fellow men following the example of Christ. Christ is supposed to demonstrate his freedom by the exercise of his "free imperial will"⁴ in calling disciples and in laying down his life of his own

1. J. Weiss, in his History of Primitive Christianity, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 148, mistakenly believes that Paul would have to be reconverted to the law to allow himself to be purified in the temple, according to Acts 21:20-26. Paul reserved the right for Jews to give allegiance to the law, but denied that they were obligated to do so.

2. Wilhelm Brandt, Freiheit im Neuen Testament, (München, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1932), p. 24.

3. Ibid., p. 5.

4. Ibid., p. 8.

volition. Brandt claims that the truly free man is the one who, like Christ, is liberated from evil, yet, like Christ, willingly reenters the arena of conflict and subjects himself to the slavery of his people in order to help them find freedom. But is this the biblical concept of freedom? Does not Brandt confuse the law of Christ with the law of Moses? Freedom for Paul is first of all freedom from the law. Brandt passes by freedom from the law in one paragraph,¹ as though freedom from law were just a small point in Paul's theology instead of the hinge on which his theology swings. Brandt's error stems from his obvious though inarticulate premise that freedom is found by the imitation of Christ. It is exactly such false counsel that Paul decries in his warfare with the Judaizers. Any attempt at perfection--regardless of whether the norm is the law or Jesus Christ--must result in the same formidable and awesome revelation of personal imperfection. Brandt has misunderstood Paul at the fundamentum because, as Schlier points out,² freedom from law means freedom from all moralistic impositions from any source. This is just what Paul means when he asserts, "We preach Christ".³ What else could he have been thought to preach? Evidently the moralism of Jesus. Paul did not teach what Jesus taught--he proclaimed Christ himself. "We preach Christ", not Jesus' ethics, Jesus' example, Jesus' beliefs, Jesus' torah, but Christ himself, crucified, risen and

1. Ibid., pp. 16, 17.

3. I Corinthians 1:23.

2. Schlier, Theologisches Wörterbuch, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 493.

coming again! Freedom is accomplished by being "in Christ", not by being like Christ.

3. Freedom "in Christ" effects obedience to the law.

Christ is the perfection of the law, and those who are in him are in the law as well. The law is as holy as Christ is holy. There is in Christianity no disdain of the law as obsolete, no indifference to it as composed of petty minutiae, no dismissal of it as an inferior revelation. Christ established the law as righteous by meeting its demands, and by his resurrection made its righteousness available to man. If a man will humble himself to the level of truth and admit that he is unable to fulfill the requirements of God, he can find the fulfillment of the righteousness required of him in Christ. This is freedom, true freedom. Lack of freedom is sin, and also it is sin not to find freedom. The absence of freedom decreases the likelihood of finding it. Unfreedom--sin--is the reason why men prefer to go down to death in the illusory pursuit of freedom apart from God.

"Sin remains, nevertheless, a constant drag upon and menace to man's freedom. Pre-Christian thought of sin regarded it primarily, though not exclusively, as an offence against Law--a breach of the God-given disciplinary rules which govern man's earthly life. But, in the light of Jesus Christ, Paul saw Sin not so much as a wilful breach of Law as an excessive attachment to it--that is, a determination to cling to a legal relationship with God when God Himself offers mankind a filial one in its stead (cf. Gal. 3:1ff.). Sin refuses the freedom with which God would endow us, in a vain attempt to secure another kind of freedom which will leave the egoism of the self untouched. Sin always involves an element of deception, for it would persuade men, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, that the ultimate norm of human conduct is capable of being stated in legal terms and can be reached by moral effort (cf. Rom. 2:17 ff.). Sin would, in fact, foreclose the issue of man's freedom by confining it to that measure of liberty which is attainable within a Universe

ruled by Law. Thus it condemns men to permanent bondage, for it gives to them no assurance of anything beyond this present order of things. God's purpose, on the contrary, envisages for man a heritage of freedom and good life beyond all present imagining. 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him' (I Cor. 2:9, cf. Rom. 8:20 f.). There remains only one indispensable condition to be fulfilled in order that man may realize this destiny. He must abandon every pretence of having achieved it on earth, and still more of having deserved it (cf. I Cor. 4:7). He must recognize that he lies under obligation to a transcendent divine Goodness beyond all his power to satisfy, and he must launch himself unreservedly upon God's Fatherly intentions disclosed in Jesus Christ."¹

It is merely the continuation of that same sin which makes moralism impossible to insist that salvation can be attained in being like Christ.

Freedom from the law results in the observance of the law. Freedom in Christ results in being like Christ. This was an observable result of Paul's gospel, although the Apostle frequently had to lash out against the danger of corrupting liberty by license. "What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!"² "How can we who died to sin still live in it?"³ But this dissolution does not invariably happen, first of all because the law-free Christian wants to live as his Lord would have him. "The commands of God appear to us no longer simply as menacing demands and accusations which put our consciences in a state of terrible unrest. We recognize in the divine commands God's helping hand, with which he would like to lead us and protect us from evil."⁴ Secondly, it is possible for him so to live.

1. Child, op. cit., pp. 118, 119.

2. Rom. 6:15, cf. 3:8, 6:1. 3. Romans 6:2.

4. Adolf Köberle, Das Leben im Geist als Freiheit von Gesetzlosigkeit und Gesetzlichkeit, (Basel, Verlag von Heinrich Majer, 1949), p. 34.

The believer is already dead with Christ to all sin—what remains is for him to realize the fact, "so you also must consider yourselves dead to sin".¹ Thirdly, he is free from the rebellion which even the most compliant feels when he is regulated by another. It may have been in this sense, as instigator of opposition, that Paul thought of the law as a cause of sin.² The negative command, like a natural law, meets with an equal and opposite reaction. In Christ, the believer is not protected from the possibility of sin, but he is freed from the compulsion to sin.³ Freedom from law is not freedom from its intention, but from its condemnation. Also, as Luther says, "Our faith in Christ does not free us from works, but from false opinions concerning works, that is, from the foolish presumption that justification is acquired by works."⁴ It is the curse of the law which is destroyed, annihilated; its blessing remains, for Christ has taken away the curse of the law, that those who are in him may have its blessing. "Faith . . . makes the law and works unnecessary for any man's righteousness or salvation",⁵ but it does not make them optional. They are unnecessary for salvation, but they are necessary for a life becoming a Christian. Legalism is largely a disposition, that is, it is the motive not the action that makes it repugnant. Freedom from legalism means freedom from a false notion of good works, but not freedom from the good works themselves.

1. Romans 6:11.

2. Romans 5:20, 7:8.

3. Bultmann, op. cit., (Theology of the N. T.), Vol. I, p. 332.

4. Martin Luther, "A Treatise on Christian Liberty," translated by W. A. Lambert, Works of Martin Luther, (Philadelphia, A. J. Holman Company, 1916), Vol. II, p. 344.

5. Martin Luther, quoted by John T. MacNeill, Books of Faith

Freedom from law paradoxically results in obedience to the law, and an obedience which is much more than punctilious observance. The new obedience is free and willing. The believer's outlook is no longer that "God is his boundary", but "God is his boundary".¹ Christianity results in spontaneous, splendid, extravagant allegiance. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law."² That is, there is no law which forbids them by commanding them, nor is there any law which can command them. They arise from the Spirit as the natural outflow of the life in Christ. The believer not only keeps the law with a ready heart, but passes beyond it by acting in the Spirit of the God who gave it. The law is finished because it is transcended, yet by its transformation it is established. Believers demonstrate their freedom by keeping not only the precepts of the law but its purpose. A willing observance of the law results not in a reluctant righteousness but in a hearty holiness.

4. Freedom from law indicates freedom from sin and death.

Freedom from law implies freedom from sin and death. Law, sin and death are collocated in Paul's mind. Man is captive of sin through law unto death. If a man is freed from one, he is freed from all. If one is freed from law, he is freed from sin.³ If one is freed from sin, he is freed from death.⁴ Law, sin and
and Power, (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1947), p. 13.

1. Barth, III, 4, 666, quoted by Otto Weber, Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics, (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1953), p. 245.

2. Galatians 5:22, 23.

3. Romans 7:4-6.

4. Romans 6:20-23.

death are bound together as a single entity. Paul frequently mentions all three in one sentence, almost as a single thought.¹ Consequently, freedom from the law is total freedom: "Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death".²

As a man is freed from law, so he is freed from sin and death. That is to say that just as a Christian is and is not free from the law, so he is and is not free from sin and from death. The same "tension" or "dialectic" which obtains in his relation to the law obtains in his relation with sin and death. The believer is freed from the law and yet he gives his obedience to it. The sinner though he continues to sin is justified, and the mortal though he will die is delivered from death. But there is a distinction of time to be noted in the order of law, sin and death. As they work against man, they appear in succession as sin, law, death: "Sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me."³ Even in this order, it is the law which (according to the context in Romans seven) is the controlling factor in reviving sin and causing death. But in the order in which they are overcome, they appear in succession as law, sin, death. The law has been ended,⁴ sin is being ended,⁵ and death will be ended.⁶ Thus, while the believer is caught in the continuous tension between the condemnation of the law and freedom from it,

1. Romans 5:20, 21; 7:5; 7:8; 7:9; 7:11; 7:13; 8:2.

2. Romans 8:2.

3. Romans 7:11.

4. Romans 10:4.

5. Romans 6:12-14.

6. I Corinthians 15:26.

between sin and holiness, and between death and life, he is given the assurance that God has resolved the tension in his favor.

This assurance rests upon the already accomplished fulfillment of the law in Christ. It must follow from the fulfillment of the law that sin and death are nullified because the law embraces and controls sin and death, and because its requirements are met in Christ, its concomitants must also leave the Christian's life. Freedom from law, as illustrated by the fact that it is the first of man's obstacles to be overcome, is the primary freedom of Paul's theology.

What is the relation between law and death? Death is the end result, the final punishment for the sin which is exposed by the law. Freedom from death per se plays a consequent rather than a paramount role in Paul's theology. It was not personal death which was a terror to his soul, but rather the fear that he and others were missing the righteousness which God had made possible for man to experience. Uppermost in Paul's mind was the fear of the law which makes man incapable of recognizing that God is approachable. More serious than death itself is the despair which rules the man who seeks justification by the law without hope of finding it because of the law. Death is irreversible but the condemnation of the law is not. To fail to find the fulfillment of the law is more tragic than death. Paul rejoiced in freedom from law and sin as in freedom from death, but he rejoiced more in the fact that God could be known than that he personally did not have to die. Paul proclaims the

resurrection--the Christ-gained victory through and over death--not only as a triumph in itself¹ or as a warranty of the raising of others,² but first of all as an emancipation from the law³ as well as from sin.⁴ Freedom from law is a more central theme in Paul's letters than freedom from death because the former has to do with pleasing God but the latter has to do with avoiding the penalty of failure to please him. This is not to say that Paul's emphasis was this-worldly rather than other-worldly. His emphasis was always God-centered, and God's sovereignty is as powerfully operative in one world as in the other. Hence, righteousness, i. e., the fulfillment of the law, is the most important word in Paul's letters and life. Freedom from death, while also important, is consequent because it is dependent upon righteousness.

Freedom from the law of death is expressed not by a doctrine of the perpetuity of the soul but by the resurrection of the body. The Greeks conceived of death as a release of the immortal soul from the prison of the body to an eternal disembodied spirit existence. Judeo-Christian thought regarded death without God as the total end of the entire man--body, soul and spirit. There is no immortal soul which perseveres. Death kills utterly. Yet a man who dies can live again by the resurrection of the body. This resurrection is brought about by a new creation, but continuity and identity are maintained by the body. "Body" as Paul uses it

1. See II Timothy 1:10.
2. Romans 1:11, I Corinthians 15:20, 22, I Thes. 4:14, 5:10.
3. Rom. 5:18, 7:4, 8:3, 4.
4. I Corinthians 15:3, 15:17, II Corinthians 5:14, 15.

means more than the physical composition of man because, when he speaks of the resurrection of the body, he says in the same context that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God".¹ Body means not just the flesh but the whole man. When it dies man is dead, really dead. There is no spirit which can persist in an existence by itself. However, the God who raised Jesus "will make even your mortal bodies live"² by resurrecting them. This resurrection is just as total as was death--the body is raised in complete continuity of personality, individuality and identity--nothing less than it was before. But Paul never says that God will make "even your flesh live through his Spirit" because flesh is all that which is enmity to God, all that which lives in separation from his Spirit. Once the flesh is dead it is forever dead, and God himself will not raise it again. The body will be resurrected, the flesh never. Understanding Paul's terms as he uses them, it is legitimate to say that the flesh kills the body with itself. But death for the believer frees him from all enmity with God, for the flesh alone remains dead. Thus, death for the Christian becomes "not an event only, but an experience".³

The believer is freed from death, but that does not mean that death is not real, or that it can be avoided, or that it may not be painful, but it does mean that the grave will be buried, that

1. I Corinthians 15:42-50. 2. Romans 8:11.

3. James Denney, The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1917), p. 211.

death will die, and that the God who alone has immortality¹ will share it with all those who are "asleep in Christ".² The Christian is freed from the finality of death.

What is the relationship between law and sin? Paul as a Jew attempted to remove the legal barrier between himself and God by overcoming his sins. As a Christian he regarded the law as "wiped away",³ but the resulting state was anomalous because he still found himself sinning even against his will.⁴ The believer is freed from the law before he is freed from sin, and he is freed from condemnation before he is freed from the reason for condemnation. For the "spiritually minded" believer the fact of the law's end becomes a challenge for him to bring sin also to an end. The initial victory over the law gives him the conviction that sin is also vanquished. Even though he feels the strong dichotomy between the fact and the possibility he strives toward the possibility, knowing that he is now free to present himself to God. The "fleshly minded" believer will use his freedom to dally with the sin from which he has been delivered. This antinomianism meets with Paul's strongest condemnation because it is not the exercise of freedom but the dissolution of freedom. Sin, and therefore enslavement, consists ultimately in the desire to be wrongfully free.⁵ "Sin is the desire for freedom and the illusion that it is possible to be free from God".⁶ Sin remains "unfreedom" even though one imagines that

1. I Timothy 6:16.

2. I Cor. 15:18. Cf. I Thes. 4:13-15.

3. Colossians 2:14.

4. Romans 6.

5. Otto Weber, Die christliche Freiheit und der autonome Mensch, (München, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1949), p. 14.

6. Emil Brunner, Man in Revolt, translated by Olive Wyon, (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1947), p. 272.

it is liberty. The reason for being a Christian is that the individual might live for God.¹ If one desires to live godlessly, he would do better to follow another religion because Christianity makes sinning hateful, just as sinning makes Christianity hateful. The law's end establishes the promise that sin is ended. And even though in practice the believer finds himself continuously short of real holiness, he still cannot be satisfied with anything less.

Freedom from law is the pivotal concept in Paul's theology of freedom. With the same powers which eliminated law, death is certain to be eliminated and sin is being eliminated. What else is there which stands between God and man? Man needs only to be emancipated from the attitude of mind engendered by legalism to be free. The law is ended, and it exists now only as a measure of the righteousness imputed to him as a gift. There is no need to force God to be kindly, to make a claim for grace by virtue of a worthy deed, or to grasp after his favor by an ingratiating service. God cannot be forced. He owes no man anything. "God will be no man's debtor". Certainly God does bless those who struggle to keep the law as far as they can, but even so, grace cannot be earned.² The essence of Paul's conversion was the revolution in his thinking about the law. He realized that he was no longer under the law but with it, no longer fearful of its justice but joyful that it is satisfied. Man need never again be craven or cowed before God, for he can stand in his presence as one redeemed, saved and emancipated by the salvation won for him by Christ.

1. Gal. 2:19, cf. Rom. 6:1-4. 2. Romans 4:4, 5.

II. Freedom from "the Dominion of Darkness": the Invisible Victory

A. The Dominion of Darkness

The world in the age when Christianity was born was peopled with myriad numbers of unseen spirit forces which dominated the lives and threatened the fortunes of all men and women. Paul, together with all the leaders of the early Church, believed in the reality of their existence with the same faith with which they believed in the reality of the existence of the "invisible God".¹ But while Paul believed in their existence, he denied that they had power over Christians. The same God who in Christ had delivered men from law has also transferred them out of the "dominion of darkness" and into "the kingdom of his beloved Son."² The hero-Christ has overcome the devil and his hierarchy not by fiat but by contest, and has obtained the subjugation of the eruptive demonic powers. This destruction of evil forces by conquest is a different conception of atonement from the one presupposed in Section I, Freedom from Law. Gustaf Aulen distinguishes between the "Latin" or "juridical" view in which Christ offers a sacrifice and God accepts it, imputing to men the merits of Christ,³ and the "classic" or "dramatic" view in which Christ comes down from heaven and by conflict and triumph delivers men from the powers of evil under which they are in bondage.⁴ Aulen attempts to persuade his readers that the "classic" view is the essential motif which runs

1. Colossians 1:15.

2. Colossians 1:13.

3. Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor*, translated by A. G. Hebert, (New York, The Macmillan Co., 1951), p. 150.

4. Ibid., p. 67.

through all the Pauline epistles, and although his treatment is admittedly cursory, he does succeed in indicating that it is at least one of the biblical views of atonement.

1. The ranks of evil.

Paul never thought of the spirit forces as just the residual pagan imagination which his beloved Gentiles carried over into their Christian experience. The invisible spirit world was just as real for the orthodox Jew as for the cultivated pagan. The Hebrew Scriptures have many references to half-known powers which exist in the intermediary ether between man and God. Some of these powers are the emissaries of God, and act upon the impulse of his direction. These are "the angels of God" who are his "army",¹ his "warriors".² They form a "council of the holy ones"³ around him, and are his "ministers",⁴ "the sons of God",⁵ "the host of heaven",⁶ of which he is Lord. "The host of heaven" is associated with the stars,⁷ the "watchers",⁸ and the stars can intervene in battles among men.⁹ The powers named "seraphim" are well enough known to be described,¹⁰ and the "cherubim" are described in minute though impressionistic detail.¹¹ Two individual powers of special

1. Genesis 32:2.

2. Joel 3:11.

3. Psalm 89:7.

4. Psalm 103:21.

5. Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:4-7.

6. I Kings 22:19-23.

7. Deut. 4:19, 17:3.

8. Daniel 4:17.

9. Judges 5:20.

10. Isaiah 6:2.

11. Ezekiel 1:4-25, 10:1-22.

rank are called by particular names, Gabriel¹ and Michael.²

But some of the powers spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures are unseen forces for evil. There are the malevolent angels who will be judged,³ who are charged with error,⁴ and who will be punished.⁵ There are the demons who are so dreaded by men that they sacrifice to them as to gods.⁶ There are the satyrs, who dance in the ruins of Babylon,⁷ and to whom some men also made sacrifices.⁸ There are the "sons of God" who took to wife the fair "daughters of men".⁹ And of course there is Satan, "the adversary",¹⁰ "the king of terrors",¹¹ the "Day Star, son of Dawn",¹² who fell from heaven, the chief opponent of God and man. He has an independent, objective existence, separate from the sin and death of which he is lord, but yet he is subject to God. All these spirit forces the Jews believed in.

1. Daniel 8:16, 9:21.

2. Daniel 10:13, 21, 12:1.

3. Job 21:22, Ps. 82:1, 6, 7. 4. Job 4:18.

5. Isaiah 24:21.

6. Deuteronomy 32:17.

7. Isaiah 13:21.

8. Lev. 17:7, II Chr. 11:15.

9. Genesis 6:2. Paul may have spoken with this verse in mind when he wrote, "A woman ought to have a veil on her head, because of the angels". I Corinthians 11:10. See Thackeray, op. cit., p. 151.

10. Job 1:6, Zechariah 3:1. 11. Job 18:14.

12. Isaiah 14:12.

The pagan Gentiles also had their hierarchy of invisible spirit forces. The wisdom of their sages and the achievements of their civilization were not sufficient to deliver them from a feeling of inadequacy under the ineluctable cycle of fate and doom. Those who found Stoicism too harsh and obdurate turned to the esoteric religions of mystery to deliver them from the spirit world. The mystery religions

"may be said to offer salvation ($\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$) to those who have been duly initiated. And salvation means primarily deliverance from the tyranny of an omnipotent Fate, which may crush a human life at any moment. Death, with its unknown terrors, will be Fate's most appalling visitation. Hence the element prized above all others in $\sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ is the assurance of a life which death cannot quench, a victorious immortality."¹

There were several mystery religions, one named for a Greek city, Eleusis, the others for deities, Cybele and Attis, Isis and Osiris (Serapis), Adonis, and Mithras, the most superior of them all, but post-Pauline.² A philosophicoreligious movement of pre-Christian origin called Gnosticism later became a major Christian heresy. It too attempted to emancipate men from superior spirit forces.³ In short, the invisible world was universally thought to determine the destinies of men.

"There can be no question that conceptions like that of the seven Archons, who, from their planetary realm, determine the destinies of mortals, were almost universally influential. . . . Originating in Babylon, they have penetrated into the religions of Persia and Egypt. They appear in Jewish Apocalyptic, in Orphic fragments, in Hermetic documents, in Greek astrological texts, in every variety of

1. Harry Angus Alexander Kennedy, St. Paul and the Mystery-Religions, (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1913), p. 199.

2. See Machen, op. cit., (Paul's Religion), pp. 211-251.

3. See Edwyn Bevan, Hellenism and Christianity, (London, George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1921), pp. 99, 100.

Gnostic system. They can be discerned in the background of the Pauline Epistles, in those hierarchies of evil forces ruled by the θεός τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦτου, ^{the₁} ἀρχὴν τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ αἰῶνος."

The Apostle was acquainted with the superstitions of the Gentiles.

"Ample evidence has been adduced to show that throughout the sphere of his missionary operations [Paul] would be in touch with many who had been initiated into the Pagan Mysteries, and had finally entered the Christian Church. We cannot picture him engrossed in the cure of souls without recognising that he must have gained a deep insight into the earlier spiritual aspirations of his converts, and the manner in which they had sought to satisfy them. Even apart from eager inquirers, a missionary so zealous and daring would often find himself confronted by men and women who still clung to their mystic ritual and all the hopes it had kindled. It was inevitable, therefore, that he should become familiar, at least from the outside, with religious ideas current in these influential cults."²

His letters are sometimes couched in the non-Christian phraseology of the world from which his converts emerged, sometimes to tune his words to their ears, sometimes to refute erroneous concepts with authentic terms. The use of the non-Christian phraseology cannot by itself indicate that Paul was dependent upon the mysteries for the uniqueness of his message. First of all, the secrets of the mystery rites were so well guarded that much of their ritual was and is unknown. Many of the similarities which are known to exist between Christianity and the mysteries—and the number of these similarities must not be exaggerated—date from sources which range from one to four centuries after Paul. The best information of the mysteries is contained in the Metamorphoses written by

1. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 24. 2. Ibid., pp. 280, 281.

Apuleius, dating from the middle of the second century. In some instances of known similarity, it is possible that Christianity exerted its influence on the mysteries, instead of vice versa. In the second place, it is doubtful that Paul as a young man could have been persuasively influenced by crass pagan superstitions. The man proved himself a young Pharisee of promise, who demonstrated his passionate opposition to any religion which seemingly degraded the Hebrew conception of God. Thirdly, it is doubtful that the mystery religions could have added to Pauline thought any insights which the Apostle could not have gained from the Old Testament and from his knowledge of Christ. The Jerusalem Church, which was founded directly by Jesus' apostles, and which was separated from the centers of mystery religions, formally accepted and approved Paul's message. Even Paul's opponents did not there accuse him of partaking in the idolatry of the heathen. And finally, Paul's Christianity diverges from the mysteries. Christianity is based on historical facts, not on mythical personages and fantastic tales. All the mysteries of Christianity are revealed—they are open secrets, profundities which are to be heralded at large. "Pray . . . that utterance may be given me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel."¹ Christianity has nothing to hide.

"All that we can safely assume as to the impact of the mysteries on Judaism and Paul is that the mysteries quite definitely formed part of the milieu into which Paul brought his gospel; that Paul

1. Ephesians 6:19.

undoubtedly would therefore be open to their influence, and that many of the terms he used would have an undertone of meaning which would strengthen the appeal of the gospel to the Hellenistic world."¹

But Paul regarded the dark forces which governed the world as so very real to his converts that he understood why, even as Christians, they had difficulty shaking off their former modes of thought. Paul conceded that there were dread powers which can and do sway the lives of helpless men, powers of which he frequently speaks. There are nine or ten words he uses in referring to them, most included in two verses, Ephesians 1:21 and 6:12. Christ is "far above all rule² and authority³ and power⁴ and dominion,⁵ and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come." And, "We are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities,⁶ against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Paul also refers to the "thrones",⁷ to the "so-called gods",⁸ and to the mysterious στοιχεῖα, the "elemental spirits"⁹ of the universe. The στοιχεῖα, may have been a reference to the planets, or to the angels which rule over the planets, or

1. Davies, op. cit., p. 98. 2. I Cor. 15:24, Col. 2:10.

3. I Cor. 15:24, Col. 1:16, 2:10.

4. Rom. 8:38, I Cor. 15:24, Eph. 2:2, 3:10, 6:12, Col. 2:15.

5. Colossians 1:16.

6. Romans 8:38, Ephesians 3:10, Colossians 1:16, 2:15.

7. Colossians 1:16.

8. I Corinthians 8:5.

9. Galatians 4:3, 4:9, Colossians 2:8, 2:20.

to the seven archangels or manifestations of God in the days of creation.¹

"The idea means the elemental powers and forces of the cosmos which have sway in the phenomena of nature and the destinies of the world of men and which have mysterious and imperious power to threaten and wither life. The speculative and mythological presentations, in which the conception of the elements appear, are indeed so manifold, and the formulations of Colossians and Galatians so scanty, that a host of questions must remain unanswered concerning the heresy in question."²

All these terms for the evil forces are employed by earlier or contemporary Jewish sources. Nowhere among his epistles does the Apostle dignify a pagan god with its name, and this is remarkable because he as well as many of his addressees lived in cities which were the world centers of the worship of widely-known deities. Paul had preached on the Areopagus, just in front of the propylaeum to the Acropolis in Athens. Surely he had entered the sculptured Parthenon and marvelled at the forty-foot statue of Athena covered with ivory on her face and hands and surmounted with a gleaming helmet of gold. And in Ephesus, where his preaching so infuriated the silversmiths of that great city that they raised a mob which chanted the praise of Artemis for two hours in the theater (still extant today), he surely had seen the temple of the goddess for whom the demonstration was made. That temple was built of 100 columns 55 feet high, 18 of which were not merely fluted but carved with life-sized figures in bas-relief.³ The temple was four times the size of the Parthenon, and was one of the seven wonders

1. Knox, op. cit., (Church of the Gentiles), p. 48.

2. Günther Bornkamm, Das Ende des Gesetzes, (München, Chr. Kaise Verlag, 1952), pp. 141, 142.

3. The massive fragments of the surviving columns may be seen in the British Museum in London.

of the ancient world, ranking in splendor and magnificence with the pyramids of Egypt, the hanging gardens of Babylon, the Colossus of Rhodes. But Paul does not let the word "Artemis" escape his lips. Nor does he mention Poseidon, whose cloud-white temple he saw from the sea as he rounded the tip of Attica, nor Aphrodite, nor Asklepios, nor any of the others. The most he permits himself is a reference to the one the Greeks termed "the unknown god",¹ and then because this was "the Lord of heaven and earth"² who is now made known "by a man whom he has appointed".³ If it is true, as Weiss suggests, that Paul was differentiating between the Olympian deities and the later mystery and mundane rulers when he tells of "many 'gods' and many 'lords'",⁴ these examples are as close as he ever comes to referring to specific pagan deities.

Only the names of evil forces which were established by contemporary Jewish documents and acknowledged by common Jewish use does Paul consider not as "idols" which have "no real existence".⁵ The Jewish-named spirits have real objective existence; the pagan idols have real existence only in the imaginations of the superstitious--but in neither case does Paul admit to the deity of the powers. Both Jew and Gentile are in bondage to the dominion of darkness. In the last analysis, Paul's trenchant declaration that all rule, authority, power, dominion, thrones, principalities,

1. Acts 17:23.

2. Acts 17:24.

3. Acts 17:31.

4. I Cor. 9:6, Weiss, History, I, 249.

5. I Corinthians 8:4. The terms for the evil forces which the Apostle employs may be found in I Enoch, the Testimony of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Wisdom of Solomon, in one of Philo's works, and in the Book of Jubilees. See Thackeray, op. cit., pp. 147, 148, 169, and Knox, op. cit., (Church of Jerusalem), p. 111.

visible and invisible, exist for Christ,¹ lends credence to the conclusion that he was one who was impatient with these myths and speculations.² The power of the sinister forces is annulled by the superior power of Christ, and all in him are free of them.

2. The power of evil.

Paul believed that men were the pawns of these hostile forces of darkness. And they were not passive pawns, but active agents which took on the ferociousness of their masters, adding will to will.³ And so powerful are the demonic forces that they usurp even the will of the Christian. "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me."⁴ The Greek attitude toward the force which governed their lives was also one of resistance, but it was resistance to fate rather than resistance to sin. But fate also could not be overcome by any human skill or precaution, even if the fate were known years in advance. This is the thematic motif which undergirds the somber tales of the master Grecian tragedians. No attempt at evasion of the will of the gods prospers, but only ensnares the victim more securely in the fate which is his to endure. Many Greeks turned to religion to learn the secret of placating the gods and of freeing

1. Eph. 1:21, Col. 1:16.

2. Cf. I Timothy 1:4.

3. Romans 1:32.

4. Romans 7:15-17.

themselves from their destiny.

"All this may to a modern man appear intolerably unreal and fantastic. The daylight levels of ordinary classical literature, the cheerful philosophy of a Horace, even the tragic mood that is induced by the palpable evils of the world—pain and injustice and separation—these things have meaning for him, but he will perhaps feel grateful that the feverish nightmares of antiquity have left as scanty record as they have. For him the skies, as far as the utmost star, are clear of any malignant Intelligences, and even the untoward accidents of life are due to causes comfortably impersonal. We have never been thoroughly frightened; the ancient world was frightened; there is the great difference. . . . And till the Unknown has been realized as something terrible, till we have had the feeling of helplessness and ignorance in the face of an immense Universe, the feeling of a lost child in a huge strange city, we can hardly understand the mood which led men so eagerly to seek for 'knowledge' and catch at anything which seemed to promise them light and safety."¹

The forces of the dominion of darkness are of such strength that they deliver not only the entire age² and its peoples to dissolution, but they were strong enough to kill the Christ of God, for, says Paul, had "the rulers of this age" understood the hidden wisdom of God, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."³ But despite the great power of the dominion of darkness, it is not illimitable power. The knowledge of redemption is hidden from them, for the Church must reveal it to them.⁴ This knowledge was similarly hidden from the rulers of the Jews⁵ and from Paul.⁶ Its power is not sufficient to separate men from the love of God.⁷ The evil angels are to be judged by the Church,⁸ and will finally

1. Bevan, op. cit., p. 81. 2. I Corinthians 2:6.

3. I Corinthians 2:8. 4. Ephesians 3:10.

5. Acts 13:27. 6. I Timothy 1:13.

7. Romans 8:38, 39. 8. I Corinthians 6:3.

be destroyed by Christ.¹

B. Christ's Triumph over the Dominion of Darkness

So far in this study, two categories of freedom have been mentioned—forensic freedom and filial freedom. The Christian is freed judicially, as by a court of law, and he is freed from homelessness by adoption into a family. In the first category are included all the references to freedom from law, sin and death,² and the illustrations of the legal freedom of the surviving partner of a marriage to all obligations formerly due the deceased.³ In the second category are included all the references to the deliverance of oppressed or supposedly inferior groups to a status of equality in Christ,⁴ and the declaration that all Christians are together made sons of God.⁵ There is, however, a third category of freedom which is manifest in Paul's letters, although it is only in one instance that the word *ἐλευθερία* can be connected with it. This may be called cosmic freedom.

1. Cosmic freedom.

The one verse which speaks of the freedom of the cosmos is Romans 8:21, "The creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty⁶ of the children of God." The promise of the freedom of creation implies that Christ has

1. I Corinthians 15:24. 2. Rom. 6:18, 6:22, 8:2.

3. Romans 7:3, I Corinthians 7:39.

4. Rom. 6:20, I Cor. 7:21, 7:22, 9:1, 9:19, 10:27, Gal. 2:4, 4:22, 23, 26, 30, 31, 5:1, Eph. 6:8.

5. I Cor. 12:13, II Cor. 3:17, Gal. 3:28, Col. 3:11.

6. τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης, literally, the freedom of the glory.

wrested from creation's evil rulers the sovereignty of the cosmos which they had usurped for themselves. Paul frequently iterates the fact of Christ's triumph over the dominion of darkness,¹ but it is only in Romans 8:21 that the freedom of creation is linked with the destruction of evil powers. The point is that any elucidation of the Pauline theology of freedom is incomplete without including a section on deliverance from the dominion of darkness.

It may first of all be well to note that the freedom of the Christian is sympathetic with the freedom of creation. The Hebrews viewed man and nature as a related whole. The ground was cursed because of Adam's disobedience.² The voice of Abel's blood cried to God from the ground.³ Isaiah spoke clearly of this relationship between man and nature, "The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws . . . Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt."⁴ Thus nature is not only subservient to man's use and domination, but it is dependent upon him morally as well. Man and nature stand beneath God, and nature beneath man.⁵ The major influence is impressed from the greater to the lesser, but minor influence works in the opposite direction. In this passage Paul becomes "nature's audible voice", so that "nature becomes articulate."⁶

1. Rom. 8:38, 39, I Cor. 15:24, Col. 1:16, 2:10, 2:15, 2:20, (cf. Gal. 2:20, 6:14), Eph. 1:21, 6:12. Christ is Lord of all, Phil. 2:10, 11, I Cor. 8:6.

2. Genesis 3:17.

3. Genesis 4:10.

4. Isaiah 24:5, 6.

6. Ibid., p. 162.

5. Henry Wheeler Robinson, Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1946), pp. 47, 48.

"So also St. Paul can speak of the apokaradokia of Nature, its straining forward, as with outstretched neck, towards a deliverance from its present bondage. Nature is destined, he says, to share at long last in the redemption for which Christians themselves eagerly wait. As it has participated in the evil, so it will participate in the good of man. This is a recognition of quasi-consciousness in Nature, which now groans and travails in pain, because of the frustration of its true aims through man's fault. The moral evil is man's alone, but Nature and man are so closely interlinked that one can hardly suffer without the other. . . . This unity of land and people for weal and woe derives from their common dependence on God as their creator, upholder, and future transformer."¹

So then, nature will obtain the same glorious liberty obtained in the liberation of the children of God. However, the context of Romans eight speaks of the forensic freedom of Christians, while 8:21 seems to delineate a distinct, cosmic type of freedom for creation. The creation is freed, not from "the law of sin and death"² as are men, but from its subjection "to futility"³ and from "its bondage to decay".⁴ Freedom for Paul was always primarily the removal of the guilt of sin which, "at the touch of the Law, was forced to expose itself as sin."⁵ But the freedom of the material world and freedom from the domination of fate was a secondary corollary.

2. The significance of cosmic freedom.

There is reason to believe that creation's freedom is freedom from the power of evil forces.

a. Nature is in bondage to the elemental spirits. Paul refers to the elemental spirits (τὰ στοιχεῖα) four times,⁶ but

1. Ibid., pp. 31, 32.

2. Romans 8:2.

3. Romans 8:20.

4. Romans 8:21.

5. Romans 7:13, J. B. Phillips' translation.

6. Galatians 4:3, 9, Colossians 2:8, 20.

in every case his usage is subject to a double interpretation. He could mean demonic forces or he could mean simply rudimentary instruction. It is thought, however, that in every instance when Paul uses the word, though not in the other New Testament uses, it is meant to mean what it means in the Wisdom of Solomon 7:17. Wisdom is an apocryphal work which Paul had probably studied.¹ In Wisdom the word probably refers to the tutelary spirits of nature. Paul uses the word in the same way that he uses X 25 / ΚΟΣΜΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΥ² as world-rulers, the controllers of the cosmos. These are the powers which hold the world in a crushing, iron grip, blocking the way to God. In the four times when Paul makes reference to them, he speaks of believers as being within their power. But the repeated phrase, elemental spirits of the cosmos, links their power not only with humans but also with nature. Both man and nature must be delivered from bondage to them.

b. Creation's bondage to the dominion of darkness is implied by Christ's precedence to the evil forces as the first-born of creation. As Paul says of Christ, "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him."³ If Paul thinks it relevant to speak of Christ in his relation to creation when his purpose is

1. See page 70.

2. Ephesians 6:12.

3. Colossians 1:15.

to declare that he has won a victory over thrones and dominions, it must be because there is a connection between creation and the evil powers. This connection between creation and the evil powers must be that creation is in bondage to them, but that Christ, as Lord of creation by primogeniture, will not forever permit the usurpation of what is rightly his.

c. If creation is understood to be in bondage to the dominion of darkness, much of the selection of terms which the Apostle uses can be seen to have a hidden meaning. For instance, "I am sure that neither . . . height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."¹ Knox points out that it is unlikely that these cosmological terms are accidentally used, for they relate to the apogee and perigee of the planets, "the moment at which hostile planets are most potent for harm . . . their declension when the friendly planets are least powerful to save."² Knox also suggests that the "present" and the "things to come" in the same passage refer to the changing position of the stars and the consequent variation in their influence upon men. Knox applies his hypothesis to the book of Colossians,³ and there it proves itself an intriguing and an apparently plausible guess. The language of Colossians

1. Romans 8:38, 39.

2. Knox, op. cit., (Church of the Gentiles), p. 106.

3. Ibid., pp. 155-178.

"was coloured by a rhetoric which reflected the style of Paul's opponents; it was forced upon him by the singular poverty of Christianity in respect of the complicated mysteries of theosophical knowledge which had a potent appeal to the Hellenistic world. Paul had to present Christianity in the light of a supreme cosmic revelation, without sacrificing its essential insistence on love as the one thing needed."¹

It is likely that Paul did believe that creation is in bondage to spirit forces, but that it will be liberated from them by the triumph of Christ.

Paul's theology of freedom includes as an integral part freedom from the minions of evil because, though Paul does not directly use the word in this relation, he does use it of the cosmos, which is in bondage to those minions, and with which man is sympathetic. Just as creation will share the glorious liberty of the children of God, so the children of God share the cosmic freedom of creation. For Christ destroyed every rule and authority,² disarmed them, made a public show of them, triumphed over them,³ died to them,⁴ and sits far above all of them.⁵ Christ is Lord of all.⁶ Believers are freed from the same evil forces which control the created world.

Christ's domination of the spiritual forces was a domination of the beneficent as well as of the malevolent forces. "The freedom from the supra-mundane powers results for Paul not only in

1. Ibid., p. 167.

2. I Corinthians 15:24.

3. Colossians 2:15.

4. Colossians 2:20.

5. Ephesians 1:21.

6. Implied in I Cor. 8:6, Phil. 2:10, 11, although it is Peter who first uses the phrase, Acts 10:36.

the fearlessness of demonic beings, but also in the freedom from the mediation of the angels."¹ Deissmann suggests that inasmuch as the law was mediated by angels, Paul's counsel to eschew the "worship of angels"² was an "ironical designation for strict Jewish piety, regulated by the law."³ It is Christ, not the law, which frees men from the dominion of darkness. This may be another way of Paul's to indicate the inadequacy of the law--because it is itself not independent of the spirit forces, it cannot emancipate men from them.

In Paul's doctrine of cosmic freedom there is the same revolutionary thrust as in his doctrine of emancipation from the law. Christ has proven himself superior to all the evil influences of the universe, and wherever the secret of his invisible victory is known, there the vital force of emancipation has begun to operate in creation and creature. "The old world remains; superficially its power and cohesion are unaffected, but under the surface a new vital process is at work . . ."⁴ Unknown to many, the new creation has already come,⁵ and waits with eager longing for its revelation.⁶ The decisive battle has already been won though the war may still continue in its fury. The event of the

1. Wilhelm Lütgert, Freiheitspredigt und Schwarmgeister in Korinth, (Gütersloh, Druck und Verlag von C. Bertelsmann, 1908), p. 35.

2. Colossians 2:18.

3. Deissmann, op. cit., p. 448.

4. Christopher Dawson, Christian Freedom, (London, Sword of the Spirit Pamphlets, Number Five, n. d.), p. 6.

5. II Corinthians 5:17.

6. Romans 8:19.

cross is the already concluded crucial victory.¹ The hero-Christ has subjugated all opponents, and those who follow him into the fray know for certain that the outcome is already decided, that the tide of battle has turned, and that the victory is assured. Spiritual freedom from the world and its rulers has been achieved --it needs now to be realized.

III. Concomitants of Freedom: Equality, Morality, Charity

A. Equality without Uniformity

Freedom implies equality. Men are free and equal or they are neither. Because the law is transcended in Christ, all who are Christians are equal before God regardless of mundane classifications. Paul affirmed this with great definiteness. "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free--and all were made to drink of one Spirit."² "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."³ "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all."⁴ It seems at first quite curious that in another breath the Apostle will say the exact opposite, and maintain that there are nevertheless valid distinctions among Christians. Though he affirms that there is no longer circumcised and uncircumcised, and that "there is no distinction between Jew and Greek",⁵

1. Oscar Cullmann, Christ and Time, (London, S. C. M. Press, 1952), p. 84.

2. I Corinthians 12:13.

3. Galatians 3:28.

4. Colossians 3:11.

5. Romans 10:12.

he still maintains that the Jew retains special privileges. "To them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ."¹ "What advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God."² Moreover, God's special promise to the Jews, that "all Israel will be saved",³ is still in effect. There is no comparable promise for the Gentiles, who must be warned that their position with God is artificial, rather than natural, as is the Jews'.⁴ And although there is neither slave nor free man in Christ, "for he who was called in the Lord as a slave is a freedman of the Lord",⁵ and "whatever good any one does, he will receive the same again from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free",⁶ yet Paul requires slaves to be good men as slaves. True, he advises them to secure their freedom if they can get it,⁷ but nevertheless he enjoins them to serve their masters "with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as to Christ".⁸ Paul will call a slave his "beloved brother", but nonetheless he will return him from illegal emancipation to continued servitude.⁹

1. Romans 9:4, 5.

2. Rom. 3:2, cf. Rom. 11:17-24.

3. Romans 11:26.

4. Romans 11:17-24.

5. I Corinthians 7:22.

6. Ephesians 6:8.

7. I Corinthians 7:21.

8. Ephesians 6:5, cf. 6:6-9, Col. 3:22-25, I Tim. 6:1, 2, Titus 2:9, 10.

9. Philemon 12, and entire letter.

And while Paul affirms that there is neither male nor female in Christ, he still maintains that women's position in life is circumscribed. "Judge for yourselves; is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not nature itself teach you that for a man to wear long hair is degrading to him, but if a woman has long hair, it is her pride?"¹ "As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church."² That the matter of women's emancipation arose at all in Corinth and had to be discussed in the Apostle's letter³ projects the possibility that it came up because of Paul's own preaching there. And though Paul holds that all men are equal, he firmly maintains that the government retains special prerogatives. "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment."⁴

1. I Corinthians 11:13-15a. 2. I Corinthians 14:33b-35.

3. I Corinthians 11:2-6.

4. Rheinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man, (London, Nisbet and Co., Ltd., 1943), Section II, p. 280, claims that Paul's attitude toward government is "undialectical". "Unfortunately a single text from St. Paul has done much to destroy the force of the Biblical paradox. St. Paul's very 'undialectical' appreciation

Paul never extensively elucidated the slave-master relationship, nor the male-female relationship, nor the state-individual relationship, but he spent his lifetime elucidating the Jew-Gentile relationship. It is as clear as the printing on the page that Paul stood for the freedom and equality in Christ of Jew and Gentile. The equality of the other relationships follows logically once the principle is established. But Paul perceived the difference between equality and uniformity. Jew and Gentile are equal in Christ, but they are not nondescript in Christ. The Jew is distinct from the Gentile, but that distinction does not lie in his supposed superiority, nor in the Gentile's supposed inferiority. Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians are equal but different because their equality is different (but no less equal). Freedom implies equality, but equality is not uniformity. It is illuminating to read Romans through taking careful note of what the Apostle does not

of government in Romans 13 has had a fateful influence in Christian thought . . . " Niebuhr's contention may be tempered with his own words, for it is Paul as well as "the Bible" who points out that the rulers of this world are subject to wrath, e. g., I Cor. 2:6. "The Bible contains two approaches which, taken together and held in balance, do justice to the moral ambiguities of government. According to the one, government is an ordinance of God and its authority reflects the divine majesty. According to the other, the 'rulers' and 'judges' of the nations are particularly subject to divine judgment and wrath because they oppress the poor and defy the divine majesty. These two approaches do justice to the two aspects of government." *Ibid.*, p. 279. Paul calls allegiance to the government a duty whereas Jesus regarded it as an expression of his freedom (Mt. 17:24-27). Had Paul followed out his own logic, he would have recognized that his "duty" toward government is also an expression of his freedom. It may be that Paul was "undialectical" in stressing duty to the state because the persecuted Roman Christians to whom he was writing were in a resentful and rebellious mood. Under less strained circumstances his counsel might have been more dialectical.

say. He avoids carelessly claiming that there is equivalence because there is equitability. He does not blindly say that with equality the particular dignities of certain stations are destroyed. The type of equality proposed is parity within order, equality within system. Thus, while no one is more equal than another, there is nevertheless a differential equality. The Pauline doctrine of equality preserves the essence of vocation, of sex, of political structure, and the essences of these are, respectively, specialization, distinction, and authority; in other words, difference. It preserves these essences just as it preserves the difference between Jew and Gentile, a difference which has been decreed by the counsel of God. As Barth says, the meaning of "in the Lord"¹ is that the perversion of superiority and inferiority is abolished, but the order of superordination and subordination is maintained.² Christian equality eliminates first of all pride of place. And it also eliminates the degradation falsely believed to be the same as equality which would compel individuals to discard the uniqueness of their own station in exchange for the prerogatives of another station. Thus a woman who does a man's work loses not only her womanliness, but her hope of equality, for she can never be the equal of a man on his terms. But freedom in Christ allows individuals the right of being themselves, and when they become themselves as individuals, then they

1. Galatians 3:28.

2. Weber, op. cit., (Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics), p. 217.

become the equal of all others.

The major problem of discrimination in the Apostolic Age was that of the Jew against the Gentile. That problem was of such magnitude that, could it be solved, then surely problems of a similar nature can also be solved. The problem was resolved in Christ by one who consistently placed the Jew first¹ and who granted him a place of peculiar eminence. Yet this same Apostle could depart from the Torah if courtesy demanded it, and joyfully proclaimed that God had made the Gentile one with the Jew in Christ.

"In Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ . . . who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility . . . that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two . . . and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end."²

The sons of Abraham's faith are truly Abraham's sons.³ God himself has overcome this former inequality, and with the cancellation of this inequality, all other inequality is forever abolished.

This solution discovered by Paul was so astounding to the Jewish mode of thinking that the Apostle found it necessary to explain that God himself had the freedom to accomplish it! Paul wrote Romans nine not to defend or expound the sovereignty of God per se, but to demonstrate that God was within his rights to give the Gentiles out of hand what he had promised the Jews by dint of

1. Romans 2:9, 10.

2. Ephesians 2:13-16.

3. Galatians 3:7.

their own enterprise.¹ In the part of Romans where the Apostle turns his thoughts to the Jews (chapters 9-11), he must remind his countrymen that God has given generously to the Jews themselves, and that they should rejoice instead of being jealous that he has similarly given to the Gentiles. Now, both Jew and Gentile stand alike on the same plane, for in the last analysis, the Jews had gotten nowhere with the opportunity granted them, and were as much in need of grace as the Gentiles. The teaching of Romans 9-11 is the same as Jesus' parable about the eleventh hour.² Paul in effect said that God had every right to declare, "Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?"³ God is free to grant equality to the Gentile also, for he has wiped out all discrimination in the giving of his Son.

The principle of equality without uniformity and of distinction without discrimination established by Paul in the Jew-Gentile relationship held good for his attitude toward the ordering of the society of his day---a slave society. There are many who are impatient with the Apostle for commanding Christian slaves not to agitate for their rightful political independence.⁴ And they are impatient with Paul personally for being willing to retain a slave in his own service.⁵ But the wider context of Paul's thought makes it apparent that the Apostle had in mind a higher principle than

1. Romans 9:22-24, 9:30-31, 10:11, 11:11.

2. Matthew 20:1-16.

3. Matthew 20:15.

4. I Corinthians 7:20.

5. Philemon 13.

political emancipation. The Christian slave is wise to secure his freedom if he can legally obtain it,¹ but he is not free to subvert existing law—even unjust law—to that end.² Paul grants that independence is better than servitude, but also intimates that the existing distinctions of service within society are not necessarily evil. For a man who is a slave is nonetheless the equal of the free man.³ His master can violate his freedom by oppression,⁴ but the slave himself can violate the freedom of his own estate by disrespect.⁵ The matter of the position of the slave was not a question of spiritual equality but of political order. A man's status as a slave does not prevent him from becoming free in Christ, but his freedom in Christ does not automatically imply that he may rightfully disregard the obligations of his place in society. This is not to say that spiritual truths have no empirical consequences. Rather the opposite—the spiritual truth of the Christian slave's willing acceptance of his obligation to his environment guides his actual behavior. The slave can demonstrate his freedom in servitude to the same degree that the master demonstrates his bondage in freedom. One's dignity of service is independent of pride of place. "Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are equal, and each shall receive his

1. I Corinthians 7:23.

2. See Philemon.

3. I Corinthians 7:22, 12:13, Gal. 3:28, Col. 3:11, Philemon 16.

4. Colossians 4:1.

5. I Timothy 6:2.

wages according to his labor. For we are fellow workmen for God . . ."¹ Benevolence is expected of the master, and loyalty of the slave. This willing acceptance of responsibility does not impair the freedom of any. The Apostle never unequivocally opposed slavery. Rather, he seemed to think that God had built it into society, and that the best Christian response was conformity to an institution ordained of God. But it would be a distortion of Paul's teaching to fail to emphasize his distinctive contribution—even though God orders a society which requires variformity, nevertheless all elements of that society are equal before him. And this was the truth which was in danger of being lost in a world which confused order with privilege and place with pride. And this was the truth which eventually compelled countries with an active Christian conscience to abolish slavery—because the equality of the slave was not honored, but not because the Bible taught that slavery in itself is contrary to the will of God.

Equality as the concomitant of freedom sheds light on the relation of man and woman. Man and woman are equal. But man finds his manhood in manliness; woman finds her womanhood in womanliness. This is what Paul means when he says that a woman's long hair is her pride—her distinctiveness is her glory.² Thus the question about women speaking in the church³ has to do not with what constitutes freedom, but with what constitutes womanliness. This orientation may not make the problem any easier to solve, but it

1. I Corinthians 3:7-9. 2. I Corinthians 11:14, 15.

3. I Corinthians 14:34, 35.

at least asks the question in the biblical manner. Thus man's freedom is found in strength, gentility and responsibility; women's in grace, respect and response. Even if it is true, as the rabbis taught,¹ that woman finds her womanhood in man, yet her equality with him is not impaired, for man also finds his completeness in her. Equality without uniformity is the difference between Christian and secular marriage. Uniformity, sometimes confused with equality, results from the mutual exclusion created by the sameness of unfreedom. Christian marriage is based upon oneness out of separateness, and not, as in secular marriage, upon togetherness in cooperation. But equality, which is equalness with distinctions, is a derivative of true freedom.²

In Christ there is no discrimination of sex, status, race, nationality, or former religion. The very fact that Paul preached the equality of Jew and Gentile, bond and free, male and female, and yet could not be diverted to wage all-out war to accomplish these ends, demonstrates that there was another and a greater purpose in Christianity. The person of Christ was Paul's supreme message--all else suspends from faithfulness to this central task. Freedom, and its concomitant of equality, is found "in Christ".

1. And Paul too, I Corinthians 11:8, 9.

2. The problem of racial equality does not at all appear in the Pauline epistles (unless one regards the Jews as a race as well as a religion or a nationality). Races too are equal in Christ, for, as Paul told the Athenians, God has made all "from one blood" (Acts 17:26, the word blood being retained by some readings). Paul was thinking here of the origin of the nations from the single man, but it is in context with his thought to suggest that the "one blood" is "the blood of Christ", which according to Ephesians 2:13, I Corinthians 10:16, makes all one.

B. Morality beyond Rules

The law is just as useless in any attempt at sanctification as it is in any attempt at justification. And this point is equally important—the end of the law also means the end of legalism. Morality beyond rules is now not only possible but necessary in the apprehension of the genius of Christianity. Any reimposition of do's and don'ts—even though imposed in the name of Christ—is less than Christian. Christ knows no taboo.

Paul was very articulate in his declaration of freedom from rigorous and abstemious deprivations of his Christian liberty. Did he not have the right to be paid for his ministry?¹ Did he not have the right to marry a wife and take her with him on his travels?² Have not Christians the right to eat food dedicated to idols over the disapproval of some believers?³ Have not Christians the right to honor any one day above all the others, or all the same?⁴ Are not Christians free to touch and taste everything?⁵ To eat and drink everything?⁶ Is not all creation pure?⁷

All the matters mentioned above have to do with "questionable" or "indifferent" things, with the *ἀσχετά*. They are matters which require more wisdom than law can supply. The law still has

1. I Cor. 9:4, 6-14.

2. I Corinthians 9:5.

3. I Corinthians 10:25-27.
Cf. Rom. 14:2-4, 6, 17.

4. Romans 14:5, cf. Gal. 4:10, 11.

5. Colossians 2:20-23.

6. I Corinthians 10:31.

7. Romans 14:14.

jurisdiction in all matters subordinate to itself—stealing, lying, murder, etc. Every law in this realm is intended to embody a liberty. But the law is even more powerless to motivate right action in matters superordinate to itself—in the indifferent matters which call for the spirit, not the letter, of the law. The law is here more useless than it was in the other things, for not only does it fail in both categories, but here it does not even apply. The problem of the *ἀδικία* shows that the law—even though established and fulfilled in Christ—is ineffective in matters beyond itself. But the law is transcended in Christ. In Christ one can carry through the intent of the law in the Spirit of the God who instituted it. It is in Christ that morality beyond rules becomes a living possibility.

Morality through regulation is less than Christian not only because it is ineffective, but because its motivation is less than Christian. First, the legalistic mind would rather trust a man's morals to restrictive measures which can be readily watched and readily enforced than to God. And admittedly there is a clear danger in promulgating the idea of morality without rules.

"There is always a certain danger about a movement which aims at making its members superior to the commonly recognized standards. With unstable characters there is always the risk that, once emancipated from the accepted conventions, they will fall below them instead of rising above them, and lapse into eccentricity or worse."¹

1. Charles Harold Dodd, Gospel and Law. The Relation of Faith and Ethics in Early Christianity, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1951), p. 24.

The legalist, in guarding against falling below the desired standard, delivers himself from the higher obligation of rising above it. Paul anticipated the objection to his doctrine of morality beyond rules. He knew that his denial that legalism is necessary to compel morality was a σκάνδαλον to the Jews¹ similar to his "scandalous" declaration that the Messiah of the Scriptures whom the Jews supposed would never suffer defeat had been crucified.² Freedom from law does not exhaust life of moral dynamic because "faith working through love"³ replaces fear as the motivating power. The Christian, delivered from egoistic salvation-seeking, engages in salvation-sharing under the constraint of love. A law-free morality, at first thought a scandalous impossibility, is in fact much more effective because it is empowered by God himself. "Freedom is not safety", but it is less dangerous than legalism. Second, legalism also makes it too easy for an individual to abide by selected regulations, and so delude himself into thinking that he is better than he really is, or that he is holier than those who do not observe his rules of self-mortification. Such precepts "have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting rigor of devotion and self-abasement and severity to the body, but they are of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh".⁴ The imposition of law in matters which are indifferent to salvation is less than Christian because

1. Galatians 5:11.

2. I Corinthians 1:23.

3. Galatians 5:6.

4. Colossians 2:23.

it results from and fosters pride. Third, legalism is an escape from freedom. Freedom has its own obligations, and these are more thoroughgoing than rules can ever be. Jesus condemned those who tithed mint and dill and cummin¹ not because they wanted to tithe every minute seed they possessed, but because they were making sure that they were not giving anything more than necessary. Legalism permits men to bargain for the minimal requirement of God--love seeks to attain maximal conformity to the image of Christ. The law can be evaded more easily than can respect, honor, loyalty, friendship, love. The law is itself an evasion--it has no provision for going "the second mile". Thus morality through bare regulation is less than Christian.²

Morality beyond rules operates on the same dynamic as salvation apart from works and equality without insolence. The man who is saved by faith alone nevertheless lives a life equal or superior to the man who hopes to achieve salvation by works. And the Christian in a subordinate station is as respectful to those above him whom he knows to be no more than his equals in Christ as is a pagan slave in fear of his life before a pagan master. What is the balance wheel in a law-free system? Freedom is not the absence of regulation, but it is the result of Christ-regulation. "Christonomy must replace autonomy."³ The "law of Christ",⁴ which is the inward law of love, must replace the law of Moses, otherwise

1. Matthew 23:23, 24; Luke 11:42.

2. Dawson, *op. cit.*, p. 8, comments, "There has never been a more drastic indictment of religious traditionalism in its external negative and repressive aspects than that of St. Paul. Nothing that modern rationalists and humanists have said about religion as

pride and ambition will. The "law of Christ" is in no sense a resurrected torah of Jesus, nor is it the $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$ which constitutes so much of Paul's letters. The "law of Christ" conveys much the same as does "the mind of Christ".¹ The law of Christ is the inward compulsion of the living presence of the Lord, consciously contrasted with the external law of Moses impinging upon the individual from without.² The law of Christ is well

the enemy of freedom is stronger than St. Paul's picture of the miserable state of humanity labouring under the bondage of the Law."

3. John Elmer Luchies, The Ethics of Law and Grace: A Foundation for Christian Morality, A Thesis Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Theology, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J., (Lansing, Michigan, 1946), p. 417.

4. I Corinthians 9:21, Galatians 6:2.

1. I Corinthians 2:16, cf. Philippians 2:5.

2. G. H. Dodd attempts to identify "the law of Christ" with the $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$ in his book, Gospel and Law. This, of course, was not at all Paul's intention, and is indeed quite contrary to his purpose. Paul tries to convey the idea that all law is now at an end as far as those are concerned who have "the spirit of Christ", "the mind of Christ", "the law of Christ" as the single motivating power in their lives. Dodd argues from four references. But in I Cor. 9:19-23, Paul expressly denies that he is under law. It is manifest that he uses the expression "law of Christ" in contrast to "law", meaning thereby that the law of Christ is not legalism at all. In Gal. 6:2 Paul again uses the phrase "law of Christ" in contrast to legalism, because bearing "one another's burdens" is more than the law commands—it is the result of love. I Cor. 14:37 is an instance where Paul appeals to the authority of Jesus for backing on what was evidently a particular matter. This would indicate that Paul's $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$ is not always derived from an actual teaching of Christ. Paul therefore puts as much reliance upon guidance by the spirit of Christ as he does upon a supposed torah of Jesus. As for I Thes. 4:2, $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\lambda\alpha\varsigma$ is more naturally translated as "instructions" than "orders". The $\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta$ Paul gives for counsel and guidance, not for the unthinking response of absolute and uncritical obedience. The most telling argument against Dodd's idea is the larger context of the Apostle's message, which is that the Christian is freed from everything and everybody in Christ.

expressed by Galatians 5:22, 23, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law." Morality beyond rules results in a finer ethical behavior than can be found through law.

"Love replaces fear, securing an obedience more intelligent, more thorough, more hearty, than could be secured by mere law. Hence Christ frees us from the external concept of compulsion (which is not freedom) by realizing His law in us, by His Spirit, which becomes a willing and committed obedience. Hence freedom is not from the law but in the law."¹

Therefore morality beyond rules is possible only within the bounds of true freedom.

C. Charity above Liberty

Liberty limited by love is the highest expression of true freedom. For although the Apostle adamantly defended his freedom in regard to the indifferent matters, in every case he willingly surrendered that freedom out of love. That is to say, he surrendered his freedom not because he was not free and not because his critics were at all in the right, but because he loved them, and hoped to win them by striking from his life every amoral practice which affronted them. Paul was at heart the opposite of the ascetic, but he could adopt ascetic practices for the sake of weaker brethren. It was because of his willing suspension of freedom that he charged nothing for his ministry while he was in Corinth.² One of the reasons why Paul remained single may have been because of the

1. Luchies, op. cit., p. 441.

2. I Cor. 9:15-18, II Cor. 11:7-11, 12:13, cf. Acts 18:1-3.

celibates of his day who tended to look askance at men who married. Paul himself made it clear that men were free to marry,¹ even though he thought it better if they did not.² The Apostle was also willing to forego eating meat which had been dedicated to an idol if thereby he could soothe the perturbations of some of his more sensitive fellow believers.³ Indeed, he was willing to become a vegetarian for life, were that necessary to avoid damaging the faith of a weaker brother.⁴ He willingly discontinued even his freedom from the law when he deferred to the wishes of the elders and brethren in Jerusalem, took a temple vow, and paid the expenses of four men who wanted to purify themselves and shave their heads.⁵ This latter gesture cost him years of imprisonment, and eventually his life.

All that is lawful may not be licit, all that is permissible may not be expedient, all that is allowable may not be loving. Should Paul or some of the stronger Corinthian believers have persisted in flaunting their freedom at the groundless prejudices of the Christian brethren who had dietary obsessions, they would actually have been limiting their own freedom. To be free must also mean to have the option between exercising and abnegating freedom in instances where harmony is of higher value than small-minded consistency. Freedom is neither detachment nor impunity. Detachment would mean withdrawal, and impunity would mean disdain.

1. I Cor. 7:9, 28, 38, 9:5. 2. I Cor. 7:1, 7, 8, 27, 37, 38.
3. Romans 14:13-23. 4. I Corinthians 8:13.
5. Acts 21:17-26.

Freedom is found in commitment and love. This means not that a Christian is limited by another man's scruples¹--it is on the contrary enlarged by love. Liberty is increased, not impaired, when withdrawn out of courtesy and regard for another's sensibilities. The suspension of freedom is the exercise of a greater freedom. "The Christian is free to do as he pleases, but he is pleased to limit what he does."² Or, even more trenchantly expressed, "Freedom when it loses its fetters becomes itself the fetter of a greater freedom."³ Love is the greatest expression of liberty.

The Apostle resolutely guarded the right of every Christian to ethical freedom, even when that freedom was in contradiction to his own practice. In all questions concerning the eating of dedicated meat, Paul began by stating that the right was with the individual of the liberal persuasion.⁴ Paul and the Jerusalem decree are in practical harmony. Paul, in the final analysis, says just as does the decree, that believers are "to abstain from the pollutions of idols"⁵ and to "abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols".⁶ Paul, however, insists that the immolated meat is perfectly amoral in itself, and that eating it is wrong only because some mistakenly think that eating such meat contributes

1. I Cor. 10:29b, Rom. 14:5b. 2. Watermilder, op. cit., p. 30.

3. Kahlil Gibran, quoted by Lois Jean Smeltzer, "Freed to" Christ, Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Columbia University under the faculty of Union Theological Seminary, (New York, 1952), frontispiece.

4. Rom. 14:2, 14, 20, I Cor. 8:4-8. 5. Acts 15:20. 6. Acts 21:25.

to belief in the existence of idols. The Jerusalem Council reasons from the premise that eating idol-dedicated meat is illegal, and consequently would be wrong even if it had no adverse empirical consequences. Paul's motivation is a freely given allegiance given out of love; the Council's motivation is a required obedience based on a law. Thus, even though the end result is exactly the same, the Paulinists are free; the legalists are not. The right was with the individual who was paid for his ministry,¹ and, were it not "in view of the impending distress"² and the probability of "anxieties", the right would be with the non-celibate.³ And, of course, the right was with the individual who no longer obligated himself by taking temple vows.

Paul, never an irresponsible religious iconoclast, tried to steer his people along the narrow course between law and license. "Legality and lawlessness, nomianism and antinomianism, are inimical brothers of the same tribe."⁴ Paul's rebuttal of the authoritarians, and his certification of the rights of the liberally minded, is balanced by his plea for the exercise of Christlike love. In context with a dispute over the *ἀδικήματα*, Paul writes, "Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him. For Christ did not please himself . . ."⁵ It is a non sequitur to conclude that men who are freed from the law are lawless. A Christian is not an antinomian. Freed from the law, he is guided

1. I Corinthians 9:3-14.
2. I Corinthians 7:26.
3. I Corinthians 7:1-38.
4. Bornkamm, op. cit., p. 134.
5. Romans 15:2, 3; see entire paragraph.

by the Spirit, for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom".¹ The law is replaced by more than the law—it is replaced by "the law of Christ" (not "the law of Christ"), "the mind of Christ", "the love of Christ", "the spirit of Christ".² Paul emphasizes this when he says that we have "our freedom . . . in Christ Jesus".³

This kind of liberty is dangerous. But its proper exercise is more effective than restrictive practices in creating Christian deportment. And though it is not without risk, it is less dangerous than legalism. This is why Paul called the disciplinarians of Corinth—sincere and forceful though they probably were—not stronger but "weaker" brethren. As Paul's own pre-Christian experience proved, it is possible to be ethically blameless according to the law and still be wrong.⁴ While it may be so that "Too much liberty corrupts an angel",⁵ it is also true that "The man who does

1. II Corinthians 3:17.

2. Romans 8:35, II Corinthians 5:14, Ephesians 3:19, Romans 8:9, respectively.

3. Galatians 2:4. "'All things are yours' (I Cor. 3:21) is indeed the noblest character of Christian freedom, but only when interpreted in the light of the succeeding words, 'ye are Christ's.' . . . Hence 'liberty' in the Christian sense is always limited by the sanctions of 'the mind of Christ'; in other words, by a reference to the ethical ideal for which Christ stands." R. Martin Pope, "Liberty (Christian)", *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings, (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1914), Vol. VII, p. 909.

4. "We shall not easily be able to forget again that one can be a non-smoker, teetotaller and vegetarian, and yet be called—Adolf Hitler." Karl Barth, *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*, Dritter Band: *Die Lehre von der Schöpfung*, Vierter Teil, (Zürich, Evangelischer Verlag A. G. Zollikon, 1951), p. 395.

5. *Terence Made English*, (1694), p. 123.

no wrong needs no law."¹ This is a dilemma solved by love. Life must be above law to escape its condemnation, but life without any principle will deteriorate. Above the law a man is free, above love and he is corrupted. Freedom is neither anarchy nor autarchy. Freedom is a life of Christ-like love. Therefore Augustine's mighty word rings eternally true: "Love, and do as you will".²

Epilog: "The Logic of Liberty"

A. Freedom is the Gift of God

Because freedom is in God alone, man finds his freedom in saying "yes" to God. If he says "no", he does not avail himself of the freedom which can be his. Freedom has its very meaning only in relation to God.³ Man, though capable of receiving freedom, does not possess even the freedom to decide for or against receiving it, for freedom is found only in the decision for freedom. If a man is unwilling to grant that freedom is found in God alone, he will seek the apparent, synthetic freedom of wilfulness, which is the essence of sin. The climactic synthetic freedom which he imagines to be his is the liberty to take his own life. In this, at least, he thinks he is free. The man who rejects God confuses wilfulness with liberty, and slavery becomes his freedom. Although freedom is found in God alone, and not in man at all, every man is free to choose God. But when he does, he will confess that his decision came from God, and give to him all the praise and glory.

1. Menander, unidentified fragment 845K.

2. "Ama, et fac quod vis."

3. Karl Barth, Englisch²⁶ Kolloquium, University of Basel, class notes of June 22, 1954.

*Dilemma
is the right
thing.*

Freedom is a gift from God. Paul never speaks of freedom as the intrinsic property of the self-sufficient man. A man is "called" to freedom,¹ or is "set" free.² No man is ever spoken of as making himself free.³ "Freedom is God's great gift, the gift of meeting with Him Without any possibility on our side God's great possibility comes into view, making possible what is impossible from our side."⁴ Man's participation in freedom is the acceptance of it.

"The being of God alone is unconditioned, absolute freedom; that of the creature is conditioned, relative freedom, freedom in dependence. The more that any view of freedom ignores this primal fact of man's permanent dependence—up to the extreme case where man regards himself as the unconditionally free, world-creative Self—the more disastrous will the misunderstanding become."⁵

Man is like a caged bird which has the capacity to fly, but not the freedom. When uncaged, it exercises its ability to fly, but it acquires a freedom not before possessed. Or, changing the metaphor and paraphrasing Rousseau, God sets man free, but everywhere he is in chains. As in Paul's time, the crucial issue before the world today is the wholesale failure to claim spiritual freedom. Were it missed, it could be obtained, for it is a gift.

"Freedom . . . in Christ," a biblical phrase, is different from what is understood by the more familiar but less accurate phrase, "Christian liberty". The Greek language sometimes has two or more words which must be translated by a single English word—for

1. Galatians 5:13. 2. Gal. 5:1, Rom. 6:18, 22, 8:2, 21.

3. I Cor. 7:21 speaks of "gaining" freedom, but this is a reference to slave emancipation only.

4. Karl Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, translated by G. T. Thomson, (London, S. C. M. Press, 1952), p. 17.

5. Brunner, op. cit., p. 262.

instance, ²ἔρως and ἀγάπη by "love". With the case of ³ἐλευθερία, however, there is a single Greek word which may be rendered by either of two English words, "freedom" and "liberty". "Freedom" is the term of the widest application in English. "Liberty" may be used interchangeably with "freedom", but for the sake of greater preciseness, it is used in this thesis of situations which involve a choice, especially an ethical choice. Thus, the knowledge of God is freedom, while the unrestricted eating of idol-dedicated sacrifices is liberty. Freedom in Christ "is the freedom of the Spirit—the new creation which changes man's nature and liberates him from the state of psychological and moral bondage to the world and the forces that rule the world".¹ Freedom in Christ has to do with salvation. It is the quality of life which ensues from justification and sanctification. It is first and foremost freedom from the condemnation and death brought by the revelation of the holiness of God in his law. As has already been demonstrated, ³ἐλευθερία as Paul uses it bears close affinities with ²δικαιοσύνη and with ³ἀγιωσύνη.³ It takes its place with holiness, justification and sanctification as one of the great words expressive of the relation between man and God over against the devil.⁴ It differs from these other terms in that no discussion or definition is anywhere given.⁵ Grimm

1. Dawson, op. cit., p. 9. 2. Pages 11, 13.

3. Page 12. 4. Pages 37, 38.

5. See Schmitz, op. cit., p. 35.

rightly says, "The N. T. does not give us a teaching on freedom, but it bears witness to Christ the liberator".¹ Freedom in Christ is not just peace of conscience toward the ^{286000d,} but it is peace with God despite sin, law and death.

Christian liberty, on the other hand, is well defined by Thayer's explanation of ^{ἐλευθερία}, "liberty to do or to omit things having no relation to salvation".² While freedom in Christ is found by complete submission to the purpose of God, Christian liberty is found by holding the opposing tension of law and license in balance.

"During the whole time of his effective working, the Apostle Paul waged a passionate struggle in defense of the gospel of Jesus on that double front The Judaizers lost freedom in their concern for authority, and the fanatic Gnostics and Pneumatikoi lost every authority through their struggle for freedom."³

Freedom from law, sin and death is found only in Christ, and Christian liberty is safeguarded only by the Spirit of Christ. Both are the gift of God, for liberty of conscience is dependent upon freedom in Christ.

B. Freedom is Slavery to God

The New Testament authors never speak of freedom by itself. There is no freedom in isolation. Freedom is found not in "Bei-sich-selbst-Sein", but in "Bei-dem-anderen-Sein."⁴ "The freedom which is known by the Christian is above all bound to the person

1. Grimm, op. cit., p. 45. 4. Schlier, op. cit. (TWB), p. 497.

2. Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon, (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1897), p. 204.

3. Kurt Deissner, Autorität und Freiheit im Ältesten Christentum, (Greifswald, Verlag Ratsbuchhandlung L. Bamberg, May 15, 1931), p. 7.

of Jesus Christ. It is not freedom 'as such'.¹ The essence of freedom is service to God. Freedom is "not a release from all binding norms, from the law of God, but rather a new servitude (Rom. 7:6), the service of the 'living God' (I Thess. 1:9) or of Christ (Rom. 14:18; 16:18), an enslavement not to 'sin' any longer, but to 'righteousness' (Rom. 6:16-18). A paradoxical servitude! For the 'slave of Christ' is, at the same time, 'a freedman of Christ' (I Cor. 7:22). It will presently appear that this servitude is also a 'serving of one another' (Gal. 5:13) and can demand that one make himself 'a slave to all' (I Cor. 9:19)."² This paradoxical truth is constantly open to the danger of honest misunderstanding or of wilful distortion. John Stuart Mill, in his classic essay on liberty, exemplifies the ingrained distrust of many of finding freedom in slavery to God.

"All the good of which humanity is capable is comprised in obedience Human nature being radically corrupt, there is no redemption for any one until human nature is killed within him. To one holding this theory of life, crushing out any of the human faculties, capacities, and susceptibilities, is no evil: man needs no capacity, but that of surrendering himself to the will of God: and if he uses any of his faculties for any other purpose but to do that supposed will more effectively, he is better without them."³

Such distrusting people must become subjects of another servitude, just as "One is always somebody's child". For such people God can work a double miracle—he can break through the barrier of their fear that his service is perfect abnegation, and then he can cause

1. Weber, op. cit., (Christliche Freiheit), p. 18.

2. Bultmann, op. cit., (Theology of the N. T.), pp. 331, 332.

3. John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism, Liberty and Representative Government, (London, J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1948), pp. 119, 120.

them to rejoice in the discovery that his service is perfect freedom.

The initial postulate is that freedom is in God. This is accepted as self-evident in the light of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. From this postulate the conviction that men are born to be free, ought to be free, and can be free, is derived. Drawing near to God is therefore drawing near to freedom. To be a slave of God is to be a prisoner of liberty and a captive of freedom. Slavery and freedom become ambiguous terms in Paul's letters. The opposite of ἐλευθερία is not δουλεία but ἁμαρτία or ἀνομία.¹ Hence, δοῦλος equals ἐλεύθερος. Paul's designation of himself as "a slave of Jesus Christ"² is as much a title in which to rejoice as it is an expression of humility. "Deo servire, vera libertas est."³ How slavery of God becomes freedom is admirably explained by Thomas Aquinas,

"Now the will is by its essence directed to that which is truly good; so that when, either through passion or through an evil habit or disposition, a man turns away from what is truly good, he acts slavishly, in so far as he is led by something extraneous, if we consider the natural direction of the will; and if we consider the act of the will as inclined here and now towards an apparent good, he acts freely when he follows the passion or evil habit, but he acts slavishly if, while his will remains the same, he refrains from what he desires through fear of the law which forbids the fulfilment of his desire. Accordingly, when the Holy Spirit, by love inclines the will to the true good to which it is naturally directed, He removes both the servitude whereby a man, the slave of passion and sin, acts against the order of the will, and the servitude whereby a man acts against inclination of his will, and in obedience to the law, as the slave and not the friend of the law."

1. Grimm, op. cit., p. 48. 2. Rom. 1:1. Cf. Col. 4:12.

3. Augustine, quoted by Ernst Gaugler, Der Brief an die Römer, (Zürich, Zwingli-Verlag, Vol. I 1945, Vol. II 1952), Vol. I, p. 183.

Where the Apostle says [2 Cor. iii. 17]: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, and [Gal. v. 18]: If you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law.¹

Freedom is discovered in slavery to God, but there is a still better discovery. "Esclaves de Dieu! oui, mais dans le sens d' 'enfants de Dieu'. Ce nouvel esclavage est une adoption."² "Slave" is too small a word to express the fullness of the freedom which is found in God. One becomes a "son" of freedom in God. Paul explains this in his allegory of Sarah and Hagar.³ The interpretation of the allegory is that Paul identifies law (Sinai) with Hagar, who was a slave girl, but Christianity (promise) he identifies with Sarah, who was a free-born princess, and through whom the inheritance was given. By means of the historical allusion, Paul tries to make clearer the idea that those under law are children for slavery, but that Christians are children for freedom. The Apostle did not pretend to find this meaning in the historical account—he admits that he is superimposing his idea upon the story.⁴ But the message is valid—Christians are sons, not slaves. "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship."⁵ "So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir."⁶

1. Thomas Aquinas, Summa contra Gentiles, IV. 22, quoted by Maritain, op. cit., pp. 129, 130.

2. Jacques Rochrich, Essai sur la liberté chrétienne d'après saint Paul, Thèse présentée à la Faculté autonome de Théologie protestante de l'Université de Genève pour obtenir le grade de bachelier en théologie, (Genève, 1937), p. 55.

3. Galatians 4:21-31.

4. Galatians 4:24.

5. Romans 8:15.

6. Galatians 4:7.

Freedom is not only found in God, but it must be found in God. Freedom is not optional. Not only is man not free to choose another freedom than God's because there isn't any, but he is not free not to choose. The individual is "called to freedom"—he is claimed for freedom. The rebel against God will confuse the claim of God with bondage. He falsely thinks that it is the claim which cabins and confines him, when really his bondage is caused by his rebellion. Freedom is found only in response to the claim and within it. God's claim forces man's choosing, for failure to hear and obey is rebellion and serfdom. He who sacrifices his "freedom" in submitting to the will of God, finds himself within the expansive freedom of God. So then, if what he loses, forfeits, gives up, just provides the occasion for attaining freedom, wherein is his sacrifice? The claim of God is no longer an obligation—it is transmuted into an opportunity. The so-called freedom of being apart from God is no more than "disguised slavery".¹ Its end product is a low, servile, abject type of character, without generosity, without charitableness, without magnanimity. But to be determined by the freedom of God is true freedom indeed.

"Where God commands—the God who as man's limiting Creator and Lord in Jesus Christ is his gracious Father—and where man in his limitation hears and becomes obedient to God, this God in Jesus Christ, there it is a matter exactly in the inevitable subordination, adaptation, bending and humiliating of man in the midst of his limitation, there it is a matter, lastly and decisively, of his being lifted up, his being made erect, being encouraged, even exalted, there he is through the law—it is the 'law of the Spirit

1. Weber, op. cit., (Church Dogmatics), p. 109.

of life' and not the law of sin and of death (Rom. 8:2), which he comes to hear in this place, and to which he here becomes obedient --not placed under a law, but called into freedom."¹

C. Freedom is Affirmative

Freedom in the Hellenic sense of the word refers to a self-contained ideal, as does the word virtue or beauty. It denotes conformity to a norm expressed by the word itself. This is freedom in its positive aspect, freedom which is defined by the freedom for which one is freed. Freedom in the Hebraic usage means the state which results from the absence of physical or spiritual bondage. It is freedom in its negative aspect, freedom which is defined by the tyranny from which one is freed. "The discussion of the problem of freedom can embrace only two things: what one is free from and what one is free for. Without these relations, freedom is about as void as if one would seek the location of a point for which no system of coordinates exists."² Paul uses *ἐλευθερία* in the Hebraic sense, but he also converts the Hellenic sense to Christian use. One may be freed from law, sin and death,³ and one may be freed "for freedom" itself,⁴ or, as the Apostle expresses it in another place, for "the freedom of the glory of the children of God".⁵

What is this positive aspect of freedom? Freedom is a self-determination to maintain independence from all that is alien to God. It is the willing determination of the self to be determined

1. Barth, op. cit., (Dogmatik), III, 4, p. 745.

2. Georg Simmel, "Über Freiheit. Bruchstücke aus dem Nachlass von Georg Simmel", Logos. Internationale Zeitschrift für Philosophie der Kultur, Band XI, (Tübingen, J. C. B. Mohr, 1922, 1923), p. 30.

3. Rom. 7:3, Gal. 2:4, 3:23-26, 4:21-31; Rom. 6:18, 22, Gal. 5:13; Rom. 8:2.

by God. It is life above law, above the need of law, above the dread of law. Freedom is life in righteousness, or, as Paul says, in the Spirit of the Lord.¹ On the ethical level, freedom is that splendid, generous character of life which overflows the law and goes the second mile. It is a hearty self-giving which is seemingly extravagant, almost exorbitant. Freedom is unhampered by selfishness, heedless of personal interest, careless of egocentricity. It is action without coercion (although not without the constraint of love), it is obedience without regimentation, it is service without servility. Freedom is prized by God and man, not only because it is rare, but because it is the only condition for true allegiance.

"The one thing tyranny cannot generate is loyalty; it lacks flexible men alert and ready to promote it all the time. Loyalty requires free men, self-compelling beings, men who see something good in what they adopt. They can be hoodwinked, led to focus on some singular societal good as though it were the highest and most inclusive of all goods. But the acceptance of that good as the internal guide of their acts is something no one can command or even guide from without. It awaits the free, creative action of the man from within in the face of genuine alternatives, sometimes only faintly glimpsed, but still present, adoptable, and often attractive."²

Freedom, then has a positive as well as a negative meaning. Or, as Barth explains,

"Where is the man—this is the question asked of us in the Epistle to the Romans—who will venture not merely to think the thought of freedom but actually to live under its guidance? If, then, we are

4. Galatians 5:1, 5:13. 5. Romans 8:21.

1. II Corinthians 3:17.

2. Paul Weiss, op. cit., pp. 53, 54.

to live in Pauline fashion we must dare to live freely. Oppressed on all sides by God and wholly dissolved by Him; reminded constantly of death and as constantly directed towards life; scared out of the petty trivialities of human relationships in which men are normally imprisoned and therefore free to apprehend what is certain and living and eternal; depending only on the forgiveness of sins and therefore able to direct our conduct with real clarity of insight; our reverence for all relative values and factors so completely shattered that we are enabled to make genuine and proper use of them; so securely bound and chained to God that we can preserve a calm independence with regard to those many problems and requirements and duties of life which are not imposed upon us directly by God Himself and by Him only; loosed—or shall we say, 'relativized', in the negative and positive sense of the word?—from the whole compulsion of authority and regimentation, from the whole multiplicity of godlike powers and authorities which make up our world—is not this the Pauline freedom and detachment?"¹

To be truly free, man must not only be freed from oppression, but he must be freed for God.

D. Freedom is to be Fulfilled by God

Freedom belongs to the future. Creation waits "with eager longing"² to share in it and experience it. And although the Apostle declares that the Christian has been set free (using the punctiliar aorist to emphasize the definiteness of the emancipation)³ and although he says that the Christian now possesses freedom,⁴ nevertheless his repeated emphasis upon the importance of realizing in practice all that has been granted in promise witnesses to the futurity of absolute freedom. Freedom from sin and suffering, from death and decay, is now present because its future reality is a present certainty. In a sense, then, the Christian possesses at

1. Barth, op. cit., (Romans), p. 503.

2. Romans 8:19.

3. Romans 6:18, 6:22, 8:2, Galatians 5:1.

4. Galatians 2:4, cf. I Corinthians 9:1, 9:19.

least a part of the future right now. Freedom is achieved anachronously, by drawing the present up into the future. There results a never-ending tension between the prospect and the present, the tomorrow and the today, the eschaton and the existent. The biblical view of chronology is that time and eternity are coexistent, not consequent.¹ Christians are now citizens in a heavenly kingdom,² even while subjects of an earthly kingdom. In the allegory of Sarah and Hagar, Paul contrasts the present Jerusalem with the Jerusalem above, indicating that freedom is dependent upon the city above. The time will come when the weight of the new creation will crumble the rotting foundations of the old world, and the future will break in upon the present. Freedom is not only theocentric, in contrast with the Hellenic anthropocentric conception, but it is teleological as well. However, the ἐσχατολογικὸν is contemporary, and is realizable now, in part at least. It is in this sense that freedom is eschatological, for God will vindicate the present hope.

Belief that freedom is ultimately eschatological also means that it is something more than can be expressed by creaturely means or experienced within creaturely existence. Freedom in its greatest dimension is divine. Freedom within the world is still unfreedom because the world is itself a limitation upon man. Without the hope of freedom in God a man must be content with what freedom

1. Based on an idea presented by William Manson in an interview in Edinburgh, October 27, 1954.

2. Philippians 3:20.

can be found here.¹ There is more because human life does not have its goal within itself, though it has a goal. Freedom is a gift from God, it is found in him, and it is consummated by him. Creation has yet to see what is the glory of the freedom of the children of God.

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The autographs of Paul's letters have crumbled into dust, lost somewhere in the stony ruins of desolated cities. Their language is forgotten, their controversies obscured by time and change. Paul is dead, presumably murdered by a half-mad emperor-politroon whose name is ennobled only by the dogs that bear it. The Apostle's eloquence is silenced, his bravery is buried, his efforts to win Judaism to the cause of Christ a failure. But the Pauline epistles have been incorporated into the canon of the New Testament because his interpretation of the Master's mission has best caught its surging vitality. Freedom from legalism, freedom to know the truth and to live it, has become constitutional to Christianity. Paul effected the emancipation of the Church from the Synagogue, and that emancipation has endured for twenty centuries, and will endure until the Synagogue itself becomes the Church. Wherever there are men today whose allegiance is to the God of Paul and to his Christ, there is the Spirit, "and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom".

1. An excellent analysis of freedom within slavery is found in Helmut Gollwitzer, Unwilling Journey: A Diary from Russia, (London, S. C. M. Press, 1953), pp. 89, 90, where he tells of the soldiers who became turncoats in Russian prisoner of war camps, and so dreaded the coming of real freedom that they exchanged liberation for lifetime bondage in Russia.

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